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Adventuring with Christ in  
the church staff vocations





# ADVENTURING WITH CHRIST IN THE CHURCH STAFF VOCATIONS

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## DEDICATION

*To the Women's Missionary Society in grateful recognition of its sustained enthusiasm for the cause of church vocations for the laity and for the courageous pioneering it has done in this area, as well as for the tools it has supplied to acquaint the youth of the Church with the adventurous assignments that await them in these callings, this manual is dedicated.*





## FOREWORD

THERE is no other work on earth which can compare with the work of the Christian Church. There is no other work which has a greater need for a consecrated staff of workers. There is no other work which offers greater opportunities for meaningful service or richer satisfactions in the knowledge that the worker, in partnership with God, is filling an urgent need in His Kingdom.

This manual has a three-fold purpose. As a supplement to the smaller booklet, *Who Will Go?*, it seeks to guide young people in the matter of their important vocational decisions. For those who have already committed themselves in favor of one of the church vocations it offers helpful information for the important period of preparation leading to the day when the church staff worker will enter into his first assignment. The several hundred men and women who are now serving on the staffs of local congregations (and the more than one thousand others who are working on a part-time or volunteer basis) will also profit by studying carefully the information and suggestions contained in this book.

There are also three secondary purposes. Pastors and seminarians will read this book with interest for the insights it contains concerning various areas of parish life, as well as for the tips it offers for good staff relations. Board members in churches employing (or contemplating the employment of) staff workers will also profit by the reading of this manual. Teachers at our colleges and Bible Schools have indicated that *Adventuring with Christ* will help to fill a very real need in connection with their courses or seminars in parish work and for assigned reference reading in their classes.

Obviously, *Adventuring with Christ in the Church Staff Vocations* is not the work of any one or two persons. Its value lies in the fact that it represents the pooling of ideas, observations and experiences of scores of church staff workers who have happily and eagerly shared their findings to make possible the publication of this book.

These friends know from first-hand experience the thrill of adventuring with Christ in the church staff vocations. They want you to know it, too!

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ALL who have had the privilege of sharing in the preparation of this manual are grateful to Lorraine Bergstrand of the Youth Office staff for her quietly efficient work in all the phone calls, correspondence, chats and sanctified common sense required in the myriad of details connected with handling the "personnel bureau" of the Augustana Lutheran Church during the first eight years that this has been a Youth Board responsibility. Her thoughtful counsel and glad dedication have been a source of inspiration to hundreds of church staff workers throughout the entire Church.

We are grateful, too, to the other members of the Youth Office staff, to the many pastors who assisted by replying to our questionnaires and especially to the church staff workers who shared so freely and frankly of their experiences by contributing material for this study.

A special word of appreciation is owed to artist Robert Blewett whose illustrations help so much to tell the story of *Adventuring with Christ*.

To these friends, to all who read the manuscript and offered helpful suggestions and constructive criticism and to all who shared or contributed in any other way in the preparation of this manual, we express our sincere thanks.

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## THE GLOW WITHIN

Oh, you gotta get a glory in the work you do,  
A Hallelujah chorus in the heart of you,  
Paint or tell a story, sing or shovel coal  
But you gotta get a glory or the job lacks soul.

Oh, Lord, give me a glory, Is it much to give?  
For you gotta get a glory, or you just can't live.

The great, whose shining labors make our pulses throb,  
Were men who got a glory in their daily job.  
The battle might be gory, and the odds unfair  
But the men who got a glory never knew despair.

Oh, Lord, give me a glory, When all else is gone  
If you've got a glory, you can still go on.

To those who get a glory it is like the sun,  
And you can see it glowing through the work they've done,  
For fame is transitory, riches fade away,  
But when you get a glory it is there to stay.

Oh, Lord, give me a glory, and a workman's pride,  
For you gotta get a glory or you're dead inside!

These words by Burton Braley are saying what you and I ought to be able to say as Christian men and women in every walk of life. If we have been captivated by the Spirit of Jesus Christ and have been brought to see what tremendous potential there exists for us as men and women representing Jesus Christ to the world—then, what a glory!



## **CHAPTER I**

# **ADVENTURERS ARE NEEDED FOR THE CHURCH STAFF VOCATIONS**

**“... for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.” (I Corinthians 16:9)**

Youth today have a long, illustrious line of predecessors who have given their lives in service to Christ and His Church. There is a sense in which we can think of the disciples and apostles as representing the first pastors of the Church. They were the ones who first heard and heeded Christ's call to become fishers of men.

It wasn't long, however, before the apostles learned that they couldn't build the Church alone. When they found themselves unduly burdened by the day-by-day details and responsibilities of their tasks, they arranged to have members of the congregations take over some of their functions in order that they (the apostles) might “continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the Word.” (Read Acts 6:2-4)

In much the same way, the pastor of today needs help in detail and follow through. Church life becomes increasingly complex; community responsibilities multiply. With adequate staff help a pastor

can give more time to such vital areas as counseling, sermon preparation, and ministry to youth.

Thus more and more pastors are seeking out capable young men and women who are qualified to help with the daily program of the congregation. The response to this call for help has been most impressive, not only in the quantity of workers but also and especially in the quality of people who have answered the appeal for adventurers with Christ in the church staff vocations. In fact, the very excellence and acceptability of their work is a major factor in the increasing demand for their services.

### **The Demand Grows**

You see, this is what often happens: a congregation calls a parish worker. Soon it is noted that the work in that church is being carried on with increased thoroughness and effectiveness. The Luther League is strengthened, the Sunday School grows faster than it ever did before, more calls are being made on prospective members, the sick and shut-ins—why, the pastor's sermons are even better than ever (because he has more time for their preparation).

A near-by congregation becomes aware of what is happening in the first church. The members conclude: "If it works so well in that church, it will work in our church, too!" A decision is then made to call a worker for their staff. Thus the list of workers and the demand for still more workers continues to grow throughout the Church.

Even from a financial point of view an effective church staff worker is a wise investment. The work he does—and the work he releases the pastor to do—reflects itself also in increased giving to the church budget. Thus, a good church staff worker more than pays for himself even in a financial way.

The Augustana Lutheran Church averages the following needs each year:

<b>20 parish workers</b>	<b>6 survey workers</b>
<b>12 church office secretaries</b>	<b>5 youth directors</b>
<b>6 ministers of music</b>	<b>5 educational directors</b>
<b>10 parish secretaries</b>	<b>5 parish visitors</b>

This list does not take into account the openings in the fields of missions, the Diaconate and other work of mercy, welfare work or Christian higher education. The demand will continue to grow faster than the supply in the foreseeable future. Indeed, **"a wide door for effective work has opened!"**

We are on the threshold of an expanding era as far as the Church vocations are concerned. A growing Church with a growing ministry



needs a growing corps of church staff workers. The Church today is definitely handicapped because it doesn't have the personnel it needs to do the job that must be done.

### **The Investment Pays for Itself**

Thoughtful observers agree that every congregation of 500 members should have one full-time staff member (probably a parish worker) in addition to the pastor on its staff. A number of smaller congregations have learned that the employment of a church staff worker is a wise investment which quickly pays for itself. In addition, it is agreed that a congregation should have a second full-time worker for every 200 members over the original 500.

If this goal is to be realized it will mean that hundreds of young men and women must hear and heed Christ's call to serve Him in this challenging work. The more able candidates there are for these openings, the brighter becomes the hope of reaching the whole world for Christ and His Church.

This, then, becomes the question which you must answer for yourself: What do you want from life? Let's put it this way: For what would you be willing to trade your life?

You know, the ultimate tragedy of a Christian youth being in the wrong job is the tragedy of waste. It is bad enough to waste food when people are starving or to waste clothes when people are freezing, but it is far worse to waste a life when so much needs doing.

We rejoice over that growing company of Christian youth who possess a very definite desire to give their lives—that most precious possession of all—to something that is worth their lives. While it is certainly true that every Christian is called to give himself full-time to being a Christian, it is also true that the Church has certain special assignments which, until they are filled, have prior claims upon the best youth of the Church.

Confronted with the urgent need for workers and constrained by the call of God, some Christian young people find that they must shift into a job more meaningful than that which presently occupies their time and talents. They have sensed the importance of using their lives rightly to such an extent that they realize that when they are in a field where they don't belong, or where they cannot best glorify God, the sooner they shift out of it the better it is—for themselves, for others and for the Kingdom.

A goodly number of older youth are led into one of the church staff vocations through an increasing sense of restlessness and dissatisfaction with the thing they're doing now—at the same time that they are becoming increasingly satisfied with Christ.

## God's Call

You see, the Church gets recruits for its vocations from the deep pull of the Christian life. That is what we mean by a "call." It is this strange sense of being drawn—and the gradual realization that nothing in the world is as important as getting Jesus Christ into the lives of people everywhere. You are experiencing a call when you see a need and an opportunity and your interests and abilities leap up to meet that need.

We repeat, we get recruits for the church vocations from the deep pull of a Christian life that has been fostered in a vital relationship to a local Christian congregation which has confronted its members with the challenge of a finished salvation and an unfinished world task.

Of course, it is pretty hard to be called to a work about which we know nothing. Only as the Church makes known the needs for volunteers can the Lord of the Church tap the youth of His choosing on the shoulder and say, "This is where I want **you** to serve."

Let us be faithful in offering up our prayers to God that volunteers may be forthcoming for these swiftly growing church vocations. Did not our Lord Himself urge us: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He send forth laborers into His harvest"?

The door is wide open. The need is urgent. The Lord of the Church, knowing the needs, is calling Christian youth to respond. How will they answer Him? Is He calling you? What will your answer be?

## They Love Their Work

If you were to "call the roll" of the young men and women who are serving Christ in the church staff vocations today, you would learn some interesting things. You would learn that the percentage of workers **who are really happy in their work** is higher among this group than any other you could name. There is a reason for this. Theirs is the satisfaction of knowing that through their service a definite need of the Church is being filled. Theirs is the joy of working in a personal way with individuals, leading them (children, youth and adults alike) to the Christ Who alone can make their lives complete. Theirs is the happiness known only to those who are making their lives count in a definite way for Christ.

You won't find many "clock-eyed" workers in this group, who can't wait for five o'clock to come around so that they can get away from the job. Neither are there many "blue Mondays", such as are known to some who think of their work only in terms of **getting** enough to have something to **live on**, rather than in terms of **giving** enough to have something to **live by** and **live for**. This is a group which believes



that the very purpose of life is to serve Christ. Having seen a vision of the Cross, the church staff worker has experienced an inner compulsion to repay in some small measure the debt which he owes to God. As he has drawn nearer to Christ, so he has grown in his desire to be like Him Who came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." (Matthew 20:28)

One church staff worker tells about her first assignment. She felt empty and unequal to the task, but she knew that God's grace was sufficient. He had made it clear to her that He had work to do there and that He wanted to use her. Now she was there and for a moment fear tempted her, but courage conquered. She silently prayed: "I'm all Yours and ready for You to take my emptiness and fill it with Your fullness. Then we will be ready to go!" Then she added, "And we did, the Lord and I!"

"And they went forth . . . the Lord working with them and confirming the Word by the signs that followed." (Mark 16:20)

The door through which today's generation of church staff workers once walked is still wide open. The needs are greater than ever. Christ is still calling for adventurers. Will you walk through?

### Why Are There Shortages?

Never before in her history has the Church offered such an amazing variety of interesting full-time jobs to her youth as she offers today. Nevertheless, there are shortages—serious shortages—in the Church vocations. Why?

There are those who don't **know** the needs—there is a great lack of knowledge. Many fail to realize what a great variety of fascinating assignments are available in the work of the Church. Only as we tell the story of the need for volunteers can the Lord lay His call upon human hearts. Folks can't hear a call to a job they know nothing about.

Others are **misinformed**—there are misconceptions concerning the work and the workers. Some youth know just enough about the Church vocations to have it all wrong. "A little learning is a dangerous thing." Only as we interpret and clarify the opportunities for service connected with these assignments can we lead young people to see the real adventure of serving Christ in this kind of work.

Still others don't **care**—there is a tragic lack of concern. Many whom God is tapping on the shoulder shrink back. They are following "afar off"—they are not in calling distance.

There is a religion of security abroad in today's world which manifests itself in an obsession for prestige and easy living. It has been said that the average American youth is looking for a job which will

offer him steady work, a home in the suburbs and a good pension fifty years from now. His vocational ideal is to keep alive as painlessly as possible.

The Christian Church is wasting its time trying to get unconsecrated youth into the Church vocations. Only when the living Christ, Whose compassion for the lost led Him to the death of the cross, dwells in the hearts of young people will they share His concern.

The Church is the biggest enterprise in the world, with the most important job to perform—to bring Jesus Christ, His forgiveness and His way of life, to people everywhere. But the Church cannot bring life and hope to the world unless hundreds of sincere, energetic young people will consecrate their lives to the service of Christ by enlisting for the Church vocations.

Where are you making your vocational decision? If you are making it in "security slough," God have mercy on you. If, on the other hand, you are making it on Calvary's "heartbreak hill," sharing with God His heartache for humanity, right in the midst of the struggle, adventure, responsibility, yes, and even at times loneliness and misunderstanding, you will experience the shining and everlasting glory of giving Christ and giving yourself, without counting the cost, in a world that exists pretty much not to give but to get.

These Church positions are not easy. They cannot be filled by cowards or bargain hunters, but only by radiant youth who are "all out" for Christ.

### **Why Some Youth Hold Back**

What is the basis for your hesitation? Here are a few of the questions raised by young people who sense God's tug but are reluctant to let Him have His way in their lives:

*"I'm not sure if I have been 'called.'"* What is a "call"? Said the late John R. Mott: "It is the knowledge of a need and the ability to meet it." It is God's way of informing us what He wants us to do. It is a decision on God's part that He wants us, and a decision on our part that we are willing to obey Him. For many youth, the call is a gradual, growing awareness that the most important thing in the world is to get Jesus Christ more fully into the lives of people, and the growing realization that to give their lives for anything less urgent than this is to tragically miss the most exciting opportunity for service there is in all the world.

To be sure, every Christian is called to be a full-time Christian. The truth remains, however, that the Christian Church has some specialized assignments which, until they are filled, take priority in the lives of the Church's best youth.

*"I don't feel qualified for such a holy calling."* It is true that these specialized church staff assignments require certain gifts and that not all Christian youth have those gifts. One of the most important (and most difficult) of all counseling tasks is to dissuade an earnest Christian youth from pursuing some Church calling for which, by virtue of his equipment and on the basis of the consensus of competent advisors who have known the individual best, he is obviously unsuited. Better a dearth of workers than a surplus of unqualified, misguided youth!

However, when a bright and alert Christian young man or woman hesitates to enter one of the Church vocations because of a sincere question-mark in his own mind concerning his fitness for such a holy calling, that is a good sign. Every dedicated worker in the Kingdom, whether he is a pastor or a layman, has experienced such misgivings concerning his own adequacy for Christ's service. It would be tragic, indeed, if a man was so sure of his qualifications that he felt that he was doing God a favor by entering a Church vocation! It would be far better for the Kingdom if he stayed out of such service. Our message is the gospel of the grace of God—and grace is God's giving and forgiving love to **undeserving** men.

Any job, therefore, which we take on in the Church is too big for our own unaided resources. With each increased responsibility we must lean ever more heavily upon the grace of God.

If a youth will say honestly and earnestly in his heart each day: "Here am I, Lord, at Your service," as he yields his life to the will of God, he will become a person with a PLUS. He will become an ordinary person doing extraordinary things as God works through him. The doing of his work will no longer be his responsibility; it will rather be his response to God's wondrous ability. On the tombstone of a wonderful Christian woman were inscribed these words: "She hath done what she couldn't."

The man who achieves in Kingdom-building is not necessarily the most gifted man. God's most effective instrument is the man who most completely places at God's disposal the talents he has received.

*"I'm not going into a church staff vocation if I can possibly stay out of it."* That is exactly what Jonah said: "I'm not going to preach at Ninevah if I can possibly avoid it." So he played hide-and-go-seek with God. Isaiah, on the other hand, when God called: "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" (note: God asked "**Who will go?**" and not "**Will you go?**") answered humbly and simply: "Here am I, send me." This wasn't the first time that God had called Isaiah but it was the first time that the young man, whose heart had been cleansed by

a burning fire from the altar of God (Isaiah 6:1-8), was in tune with God to the extent of catching the divine entreaty.

God is looking for volunteers. If you are waiting to be conscripted you will wait in vain. God's call is a tap on the shoulder, not a whip on the back. As long as there are shortages in the Church vocations, the only reason that bright, Christian young people should stay out of them is if they are convinced that they can serve God better elsewhere.

A pastor was chatting with a young man who had been giving serious thought to entering the ministry. The young man volunteered the information that he had decided to go into law instead because he didn't feel that he had a clear-cut call to the ministry. The pastor wisely challenged him with this question: "Are you sure that you have a clear-cut call from God to study law?"

*"I haven't the money for further study."* Do you remember the Psalmist's words? He exclaimed, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105) He didn't say that God's Word is a searchlight, showing the entire way that lies ahead into the future; he said that it is a lamp. A lamp shows you the step you are taking now as well as the next step ahead. Go ahead in faith and courage to the next step along the way. Get started in the right direction. Go on to college for a semester. What are you waiting for? Surely, it won't be any easier to get going a year or two years or three years from now than it is today. God underwrites what we undertake when we are going His way, often in remarkable, even miraculous, ways. Part-time jobs can be obtained; some scholarships and student loans are available. The healthy young man or woman, eager to develop his talents for more effective service in the comradeship of his blessed Lord, will find many ways of helping to "make both ends meet" while he is preparing himself for the Lord's work.

*"My folks are against my becoming a church staff worker."* One can only pity such selfish and misguided parents, for the day will come when they will regret their short-sightedness. Meanwhile, remember that the early disciples spoke a true word: "We must obey God rather than men."

If you are fully persuaded that full-time staff work in the Church is God's will for you, press on—with or without the approval of your parents. The chances are excellent that they will "come around" when they see how important your calling is to you, and the firmness with which you stand by your convictions will be a powerful and persuasive witness to them.



Each generation has to live out its own life. The grandparents of many of us came to these American shores when they were still in their teens or early twenties. They came into a strange land, with a strange and different language. Many of them voyaged on a storm-tossed sailing vessel, facing heroically not only the dangers of the mighty waves but the even deadlier menace of the bubonic plague, in a journey that took as long as two months to complete. One million of these immigrants came from Sweden; often as many as 50,000 in a single year. Thousands came despite the tearful entreaties of their parents, who urged them to remain in their Scandinavian homeland. Yet they came—driven by an urge, answering a call, to establish the Church in the new world and to help mightily in the building of a great new nation for their children and their children's children.

In the Eastern Zone of Germany there are Lutheran young men studying for full-time Church work. They know that the best that they can hope for is a life of turmoil and trouble, with a real possibility of martyrdom. And yet they continue to study, mindful of the cost and at the same time willing to pay it. As one said: "The Church is the only place where one can breathe free air." Another said: "The Church is the only place where the individual counts; the State is interested only in creating the mass man."

The most dangerous times for the Church are not those when she is buffeted as a stranger or an enemy, but rather those times when she is wooed and won to a lethargic slumber by the prevailing culture—in our case the overwhelming spirit of secularism and paganism.

Surely, it is not pleasing to God that a Church which has been for over 100 years a part of American life and the product of so many prayers and tears on the part of the pioneers; a Church which was founded by our crucified and risen Lord; a Church which has been the recipient of so many temporal and spiritual blessings, and a Church which has been given so much and which has been spared so much, should be facing a serious shortage of pastors and lay staff workers.

*"I'm getting too old."* That depends on a number of things besides the date of your birth. Age is revealed more accurately by the attitude of the heart than by the years that have been lived.

One of the excuses of Moses at the burning bush when God called him to the great task of leading Israel from bondage to freedom was: "I'm too old." At that time, Moses was eighty—and should already have been retired for years! Yet he was just on the threshold of a mighty forty-year period as leader of God's people.

For many people, life is like a pyramid. You build a broad base of experience and then it begins to taper up to the great creative con-

tribution you are to make under God. Full-time staff service in the Church is so full of variety and adventure that whatever background of experience in work, in travel, in the arts and in your understanding of people you have enjoyed can be consecrated and put to work in the task of winning men for God and mobilizing their lives in His glad and increasing service.

*"Church jobs don't pay enough!"* Don't be too sure! You will be pleasantly surprised to discover that in the growing realization that "the laborer is worthy of his hire" our congregations are steadily improving the working arrangements of their staff workers and raising their sights in the matter of salary, too.

To be sure, some of these positions will pay less than some secular jobs. At the same time, remember what one church staff worker says: "In my one short lifetime, I can't afford to work only for money." There are other (and greater) compensations in life than money alone.

Experience has shown that a parish worker usually has as much money in her purse at a given time as a teacher or a worker in a business office has and that it hasn't been necessary for church staff workers to try to get along without the necessities of life. Nevertheless, the salary factor is never the determinative factor in the choice of a vocation so far as dedicated youth are concerned.

There is a quotient to life. We control the numerator but God controls the denominator.

*"My hope is to work for the Church overseas but that can't be realized for some time; what should I plan to do in the meantime?"* If this is your situation, find a position as a church staff worker in the U. S. A. You will be serving the Lord of the Church and gaining valuable experience which will make you a better overseas missionary if and when the door opens for you.

Some of the most effective workers we have on our mission fields today have had several years of parish work experience in the United States. This parish service has made them more intelligent prayer partners of the home congregations and has given them greater understanding of the programs and problems of the work of the Church in America. They are doing a tremendous job in fanning the flame of missionary interest in those home parishes where they have served through their letters, articles in the parish paper, visits on furlough and in a dozen other ways.

*"I'm still a student; how soon should I get into this work?"* Every short-term or longer-term vocational decision should be motivated by

considerations that are thoroughly Christian. As a general rule it is a good practice to get into a Church vocation right away—as soon as you are through with your studies. You may not feel ready for it—but if you take the plunge you'll learn faster and mature more quickly and blossom out in your talents and personality more dramatically than would be possible in any other way. Under the guidance of the pastor and following the direction of God's Holy Spirit you will be amazed at how much you will learn right in the tackling of the practical assignments in the parish.

Actually, you will learn more about doing church work by really **doing** it than you could learn anywhere else. Also, it is unfair to the teaching profession, for example, to say: "I'll go out and teach for a year or two and then go into parish work." It is much better to go into parish work right away. The Youth Office stands ready to advise you in specific instances—feel free to write for counsel.

*"What opportunities are there for growth and advancement?"* Church staff work is wonderfully rewarding in that it is a constant source of amazement to see what God can put into you and what He can draw out of you in response to challenging situations. You are working with all kinds of different people of all ages. You are seeing them grow and develop as the leaven of the gospel permeates their lives and equips them for service to God and man. The work itself is very rich in the deep, durable satisfactions it offers the worker.

The opportunities for advancement are virtually unlimited as one grows along with a growing parish and as the circle of one's acquaintances grows. The services you can render the people of your congregation and community are limited only by your own limitations of time, talent and energy.

Yes, church staff work is a life-long process of learning and growing, in which every interest and talent is being challenged constantly.

*"Do church staff workers enjoy their work?"* That is a legitimate question when we consider the fact that experts have estimated that 60 per cent of working Americans are dissatisfied or unhappy in their daily jobs. In sharp contrast, polls have indicated that 98 per cent of the church staff workers are happy in their assignments and that is about the highest "happiness rate" to be found among any group of workers.

"There is joy in heaven in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents." There is joy, too, in the heart of the servant of God who has been the instrument through whom that soul has been led to Christ.

The best way to answer this question is to say—Ask the next church staff worker you meet if he enjoys his work, and why.

Here's what a parish worker says:

"One of the strongest appeals in parish work to me is this: it gives me an organized field in which to work out the 'debt of love I owe.' Considering the short duration of a lifetime and the importance of extending the Kingdom of God, it becomes a matter of time and energy economy to permit the Church the use of my time and efforts. We all know that we can be useful servants of God in any honorable position, but full-time service gives an opportunity to use more of our abilities in the Kingdom more of the time. The errands which I would otherwise be doing in the commercial field or some earth-bound job I would rather be doing in the service of the most strategic organization in the world—the Church of the living Christ. That there are rich compensations and unmatched satisfactions in doing the most ordinary tasks in this great organization should not be difficult to understand."

And here are the words of a youth director:

"Having gone into full-time work in the Church I would want you to know that, unless you have a privilege similar to mine, you are missing a great deal. I am extremely happy in this work and I feel that it is an answer to prayer. I would covet for you the same satisfaction from your work that I receive from mine. There is so much that needs doing!"

And here are the words of a young lady who entered into parish work after a number of years of teaching:

"I am thrilled that the Church has openings like this. When I was on the campus as an undergraduate student I didn't know that such professions even existed. I have really found myself in this work and now I am interested in staying in it as long as I am able and as long as the Church can use me."

Thus we not only covet you and your talents for the Church; even more than that, we covet one of the Church vocations for you—because we know what it will mean to you in rich, joyous, abundant living.

The Christian lives his life and serves his Lord out of sheer gratitude to the Christ Who has redeemed him at so great a price.

After all, there is only one question to ask concerning your life's work. Just ask yourself: "Is it worth my life?"

If the answer is "Yes!"—then get into it and do it with all your might!



## Service

*We thank Thee, Lord, Thy paths of service lead  
To blazoned heights and down the slopes of need;  
They reach Thy throne, encompass land and sea,  
And he who journeys in them walks with Thee.*

*We've sought and found Thee in the secret place  
And marveled at the radiance of Thy face;  
But often in some far-off Galilee  
Beheld Thee fairer yet while serving Thee.*

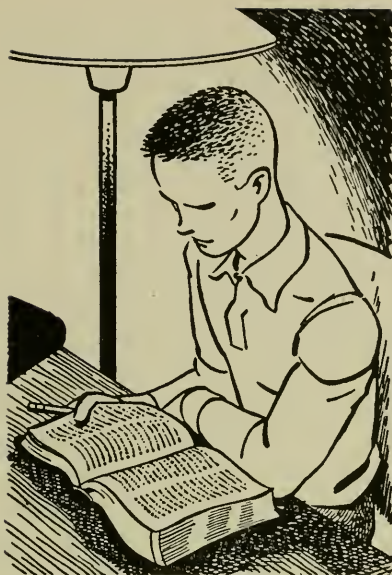
*We've felt Thy touch in sorrow's darkened way  
Abound with love and solace for the day;  
And, 'neath the burdens there, Thy sovereignty  
Has held our hearts enthralled while serving Thee.*

*We've seen Thy glory like a mantle spread  
O'er hill and dale in saffron flame and red;  
But in the eyes of men redeemed and free,  
A splendor greater yet while serving Thee.*

CALVIN W. LAUFER

Edwin Markham, in his poem, "Parable of the Builders," tells a familiar story about a carpenter who cheated himself. In building a house for a certain rich man, the carpenter used shoddy materials and workmanship. He thought this trickery would never be found out because the owner was away at the time. Thus he would make a nice extra profit for himself. But when the owner returned, he gave the house to the carpenter who had built it! So it was that the disappointed carpenter had been cheating no one but himself!

Life is like that. We get from it what we give to it. When we choose to give shoddy work and cheap materials, we need not be surprised to get shabby and unhappy lives in return.



## CHAPTER II

### THE PREPARATION YOU WILL WANT

**“If anyone purifies himself from what is ignoble, then he will be a vessel for noble use, consecrated for the Master’s use and prepared for every good work.” (II Timothy 2:21)**

We can never forget that our Lord prepared for thirty years for a work which was to last less than three. The first disciples were not sent out as evangelists until they had been trained for their tasks. Before we can **serve** Christ we must let Him minister to us as we **follow** Him. His first word to us is not “Go” but “Come”!

If we would serve Him in the church staff vocations, we, too, must prepare ourselves. That preparation is already well begun for many of you. The Church through its program of Christian education in the Sunday School, daily, vacation Church school, confirmation class, Bible class and Luther League has been carrying on an intensive training program in your life. The influence of a Christian home has also been an invaluable factor in the lives of many of you. In addition, attendance at and participation in Bible Camp, Leadership School and Youth Conference activities has been a means of further preparation for the service you will render some day.

However, a calling as big, as important and as urgent as a church

staff vocation requires further advanced preparation of a specific nature. For any young person to equip himself adequately for this service certain basic requirements are involved. These include:

1. **A sound, workable knowledge of the Word of God.**
2. **Personal assurance of salvation.**
3. **Clarity on the doctrines of the Lutheran Church, especially as summarized in The Catechism.**
4. **Knowledge of the history of the Church and of its divine purpose and work in the world.**

In addition, the special academic and vocational courses offered at our Lutheran Bible Institute and our Church colleges are of great value and helpfulness to the prospective church staff workers.

A college education, while not a "must", is a valuable asset for the prospective church staff worker. The college student, while acquiring a broader education, has an opportunity through his choice of "majors" and "minors" to learn a good deal which will be of lasting value for his life in general and for his chosen vocation in particular. A study of our Church college curricula indicates an increasing number of courses being offered especially to meet the needs of those interested in the church vocations.

More is bound up in the choice of a college than we sometimes realize. Often the choice—or the continuation in a choice—and the preparation for a vocation, finding a life partner, and the deepening of our commitment to Christ are bound up in a youth's choice of a college.

### **Helpful College Courses**

Our Lutheran Church colleges offer a broad background of academic training in the liberal arts leading to the B.A. degree, contact with Church leaders making possible a greater understanding of the total work of the Church, and the influence of Christian professors and fellow students who bear witness for Christ both inside and outside the classroom. The following college courses will be of special value to the church staff worker: Bible and Christianity, English, social science, philosophy, psychology, education, youth work, business, speech, journalism and music. Inform your college counselor of your desire to prepare yourself for service on the staff of a local congregation and he will be happy to help you line up your schedule of classes.

By all means, take part in the religious activities on the campus. Keep on the alert for opportunities to invest your summer vacations in rendering services which will benefit the Church and your own life, such as caravanning for the Board of Youth Activities, teaching in a daily vacation Bible school, serving as a counselor at a camp or working at Bethphage Institute.

It must be emphasized that there is much work to be done and many positions to be filled by church staff workers who must enter into this field without the benefit of a college education. Basically, the reason for stressing the value of a college education in this service is that, all other things being equal, a person with a more advanced education usually is able to serve the Lord with greater effectiveness in a Church in which the membership includes a steadily increasing number of college graduates.

Bible School training is also very valuable. The Lutheran Bible Institute, for example, offers extensive and intensive study of the Word of God, specific courses in the various phases of parish service including office, visitation, Church School, youth, survey, group work and personal evangelism. Clinical training is offered in visiting the sick and the aged, sharing in city mission work and assisting a parish worker in a local congregation. In addition, L. B. I. offers a continuous program of study through evening classes, summer school and correspondence courses and the Mt. Carmel summer camping program.

The Immanuel Deaconess Institute offers in addition to a Bible study program varied clinical training in parish service and a planned fellowship of living and working.

Specialized schools offer business training (typing, shorthand, speedwriting, accounting, IBM training), advanced music courses and post-graduate courses leading to a degree in Christian education.

### **What About Graduate Work?**

There are those, who, after a couple or three years of experience in a parish, like to go on to do some graduate work in an area in which they wish to specialize—such as youth work or Christian education, or in some area where they sense a particular need for additional information.

The Youth Office will be glad to advise such friends concerning the best opportunities for meaningful graduate work.

There are certain considerations which should be kept in mind. It is important that the school in which graduate studies are pursued will offer not only new techniques but also a deeper and richer insight into the content of the Christian faith. Not every institution of higher learning is in a position to do this. Remember, if a school's theology is off, its whole standpoint is off. The philosophy of youth work or of Christian education grows directly out of the theology of the institution.

In many cases it will be possible to get in some courses at a Lutheran Seminary. Occasionally, when the parish you are serving is adjacent to a Bible School, a Seminary or a University campus, you



can arrange, with the consent of the pastor, to take one course right while you are working. Often, such study will keep you "on your toes" and will help to keep you growing. At the same time, of course, you must guard against taking on too big a load, lest your studies interfere with your work or impair your health.

Such subjects as the psychology of adolescence, youth work, religious education methods, systematic theology, Bible, group dynamics, recreation and counseling are among the recommended courses for graduate work on the part of church staff workers.

### **The Race Is Run Step by Step**

It is not necessary to face in detail the total training goal of your life's work all at once. The end of the goal may appear to be unattainable. Perhaps it is—right now. But you can take the first step!

The basic essentials for parish service can be acquired along the way. Take time for private Bible study. Join the Hi-League or young adult Bible class. Participate actively in all phases of League work. Ask your pastor for assistance as you seek to clarify and further your understanding of the doctrines of the Church. Ask him to recommend some good books on Church History. Volunteer your services as a League counselor or a Church School teacher. Use the broken fragments of time each day in a way that will carry you on toward your goal.

The academic and vocational training will require classroom work. Do not let this deter you. Everything in life which is worth while costs something. Are your eyes on a goal that is high enough so that you can see it shining brightly over and beyond the cost in terms of time, effort and money? Then, step out in faith and make a start! Register for a semester in college, enroll at a Lutheran Bible School or enlist yourself in a program of deaconess training. Be obedient to the immediate guidance God has given you. He will show you the next step to take in due time.

The Lutheran Church has maintained a high standard in the education of its clergy. More and more Lutheran Church members enjoy the fruits of a college or university education. It is important that the lay workers in the Church have a background in education and training which will equip them to serve intelligently as well as devotedly in their high calling.

The future belongs to those who prepare for it. It's worth every hour—every dollar—every prayer you put into it.

## Lord, Take My All

*Lord, take my mind and intellect,  
The knowledge I possess,  
That to Thy Glory evermore  
Thy Name I may confess.*

*Lord, keep my mind from whence all thoughts  
Proceed, O make it pure,  
Make each new day Thy tender love,  
Which shall for aye endure.*

*Lord, take my will, no longer mine,  
Henceforth it is Thine Own;  
Cast every idol from my heart,  
And keep it for Thy throne.*

*Lord, take my eyes that I may see  
Another's joy, and share  
Another's grief, another's pain,  
Another's burdens bear.*

*Lord, take my lips and let me sing  
The glories of my God,  
And praise to Him Who for my sins  
Hath shed His Holy Blood.*

*Lord, take my hands, the little tasks  
To do for Thee each day,  
O guard my feet, lest from Thy paths  
I should unknowing, stray.*

*Lord, take my life, I yield it now,  
My all to Thee I give,  
I ask for grace and strength each day,  
That for Thee I may live.*

A great violinist stood before an audience and enraptured it with his playing. Suddenly, in the midst of the selection, he paused, took the violin from beneath his chin, raised it in the air, and smashed it into a thousand pieces upon the floor. The audience sat aghast. In the silence the violinist walked to the front of the platform and said quietly, "Don't be alarmed. The violin I smashed was one I purchased for a few dollars in a department store. I shall now play upon the Stradivarius." He took the valuable instrument from the case, tuned it for a moment and began to play. The music was magnificent, but to the majority of those present it was indistinguishable from the earlier rendition. When he had concluded, the violinist spoke again. "Friends," he said, "so much has been said about the value of this violin in my hands that I wanted to impress upon you the fact that the music is not in the instrument, **IT IS IN THE ONE WHO PLAYS UPON IT.**"

So it is with us. In the final analysis it is not our great gifts that matter—some with great gifts are using them improperly—it is what God is able to do with us.





### CHAPTER III

## THE CHURCH STAFF WORKER AS A CHRISTIAN PERSONALITY

**"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law." (Galatians 5:22-23)**

Your personality is the projection of yourself upon others. The church staff worker's personality is a vital tool in the performance of his duties which often spells the difference between success or failure in his work. Our obedience to the second great commandment of God—to love our neighbor as ourselves—is the expression of the reality of the first commandment in our lives—to love God with all our heart, mind, strength and soul.

A Christian personality centers in Jesus Christ and is built upon faith in Him, love for Him and a desire to become more like Him. Without Christ, the letters in the suffix "ian" in the word "Christian" stand for **"I am nothing."** Paul's words should also reflect our experience and conviction. "For to me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21), and "crucified with Christ, it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." (Galatians 2:20)

When Christ lives in us, our personality is more than the projec-

tion of ourselves upon others. It becomes the projection of **Christ in us** upon others. It becomes the very heart of our witness. This chapter is therefore the key to all the others.

### **Your Personal Devotional Life**

Your first job as a church staff worker will be to nurture your own spiritual life in such a way that you will grow daily in the grace and knowledge of Christ. That's the first great adventure in Christian living and in Christian service. How can this growth be assured?

Work alone will not assure spiritual growth. There is a great pressure of activity in parish work. The schedule is a demanding one. Yet no matter how busy you are in your church life, you still must know the need of being quiet and alone with God. In fact, the busier you are the more urgently you need to engage in what Brother Lawrence called "the practice of His presence." Christian growth comes as the result of our feeding our souls upon the Word of God and our bringing our needs to Him in prayer that He may supply them and direct us daily by His all-sufficient grace.

Your personal devotions should therefore be the first business of your life. If you cannot take time for God during the first moments of the day, the chances are slim that you will find time later on. In the work of the Kingdom of God men advance on their knees. Neglect your devotions, and the labor you seek to perform for the Lord becomes a burden instead of a lift to your soul. The Lord has said, "Abide in Me" and "Apart from Me you can do nothing." Guard carefully your quiet hour! You need it to receive new power, poise, wisdom and courage for each day's tasks.

Each person must arrange his own rendezvous with God as to the time and place. It may be in your own room the first thing in the morning, before the phone starts ringing. It may be in the church office, before your regular day's schedule begins. It may be in the church sanctuary where you can be alone with God before His holy altar. Perhaps the sick and shut-ins whom you visit know of your trysting place with God and meet you there in spirit before the throne of grace.

How good it is to know that God will not assign us to tasks which are beyond our powers, as we are strengthened by Him! Yet we must remember not to pray for tasks equal to our power but for power equal to our tasks. Then each day may be faced with confidence and strength. You will not start out just "somehow"—but triumphantly and with a sense of creative partnership with God. Press your weakness into His strength, your ignorance into His wisdom, your restlessness into His peace, your sins into His forgiveness, your wounds into

the wounds of your Saviour, your little hand into His big hand. Begin every new day with God.

Then, as you arise from your knees, you go out to live the Way and to show others the Way. Everywhere people see you as a representative of Jesus Christ and His Church. Your manner of life is a sermon. Therefore, let no slipshod method of work, no untidy manner of dress, no carelessness with appointments, no ill-chosen word be a part of your attire, reflecting adversely upon the King Who has appointed you to His service. A close walk with the Lord will transform your person and personality more and more into His likeness. You are not called to **defend** Christ but to **live** Christ.

### **Personally Equipped**

It is in the very nature of God to deal with us as individuals. While the Bible is the record of His dealings with the whole human race, and while the New Testament is the story of His dealings with the Church, we cannot read our Bibles without being greatly impressed with the Lord's concern for persons as **individuals**.

In Ephesians 4:7-13 (Phillips' translation) we read of His plan in the giving of personality gifts and traits:

"Naturally there are different gifts and functions; individual grace is given to us in different ways out of the rich diversity of Christ's giving . . . His gifts unto men were varied. Some He made Special Messengers, some prophets, some preachers of the Gospel, to some He gave the power to guide and teach His people. His gifts were made that Christians might be properly equipped for their service, that the whole Body might be built up until the time comes when, in the unity of common faith and common knowledge of the Son of God, we arrive at real maturity—that measure of development which is meant by the fullness of Christ."

It is good that God does not call and equip everyone for the same task. There are special gifts for those called to be church staff workers, even as there are special gifts for those called to other spheres of service. This does not mean that one position is of greater importance than another, but it does mean that He will never lead us into an area of service for which we are by temperament and endowment unqualified. Whom God calls He equips. The important thing is that we seek and find His will for our lives. Do not content yourself with anything less nor strive for anything more.

(For a helpful guide in determining the will of God in the matter of vocation, we refer the reader to pages 7-14 of the booklet, *Who Will Go?* published by the Board of Youth Activities.)

## Friends Whom God Has Used

If you are ever led to wonder about the place and power of the Christian witness and how the testimony of your Christian personality can be a missionating force in the world, pause to consider how God has worked through innumerable personalities in order to reach your life with His good gifts. Who are these friends? Think of:

Christian parents who have sought to build a "church" in their homes where their children might be raised in the fear and love of God;

Sunday School teachers who have led the children along God's way;

Pastors who through the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments and a thoughtful teaching and counseling ministry have made the gospel a vital reality in the lives of men;

Leaders of youth living, working, praying, and playing with the Leaguers, pointing them to the Christ Who is the great Youth Leader;

Educators in our Church colleges who have helped us to see the plan of God in all of life;

Deaconesses who by their dedication to Christ inspired us to greater devotion and faithfulness to Him;

Other men and women of the Church and fellow youth who, as saints in the making, have demonstrated by their lives that Christianity really works.

You could never begin to count or to name all of the influences which God has used to touch your life. But there are some things you can do. You can acknowledge your indebtedness. You can be grateful. And you can resolve that, by the grace of God, you will permit Him to use you to reach the lost, the last and the least of His children as your way of thanking Him for using so many friends to reach and teach you.

## Assurance of Salvation

The foundation upon which you will build your life of service is your personal assurance that you are a child of God; that you belong to Him by virtue of His creation and by virtue of His redemption. "You are not your own; you were bought with a price." (I Corinthians 6:19b-20a)

Could you lead others to the Saviour if you had not met Him yourself? Could you point others to a Way which you had never found? Can the blind lead the blind? A would-be Kingdom servant may lack other traits which can be developed through experience, but the personal assurance of salvation is so important that no combination of other qualities and gifts, however impressive, can ever compensate for its absence.



Indeed, it is the knowledge of God's great love for you and the sacrifice He has made in your behalf in sending His only Son to die for you which gives you not only your testimony but the joy you experience in sharing that testimony with others! Thank God that you can be sure. You don't have to go through life wondering about your spiritual condition. You can build your Christian life on the unfailing promise of the Word of God—His promise of forgiveness, life and salvation to all who repent and believe—a promise which He offers in His Word and seals most gloriously in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

A saving faith is confidence in the mercy of God. Assurance is personal certainty as to one's sonship. Such assurance "releases" us for service. (For additional material on this important theme, read *Living High in High School*, pages 41-45.)

God's great gift of salvation is only the first of His many gifts. Consider prayerfully the great gifts of the Holy Spirit which Paul enumerates in Galatians 5:22-23.

### Love

It is not surprising that the first quality and grace that God looks for in our lives is that of love. God is love. He revealed the meaning of love to the world most wondrously in the giving of His Son. "In this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins." (I John 3:10)

Love is therefore the first mark of Christ-likeness. It is important, however, that we understand that we do not, cannot acquire this quality of life in our own strength. It is a gift. We receive it as a fruit of the Holy Spirit's activity in our hearts. It manifests itself in our lives in two ways: first, by planting deep within us a true love for the Lord and, secondly, by creating within us a sincere affection for our fellowmen.

"God so loved the world that He gave . . ." Love always seeks and finds a way to express itself. It finds its highest expression in self-giving. So the Christian expresses his love for Christ and for others by giving—and the finest gift he has to offer is himself—his life poured out in willing, glad, sacrificial service.

Our lives must reach out into the lives of others with a deep, personal interest and concern. Be a friend and you will have friends. Pray and love those about you into the Kingdom. Maintain an unwearying devotion to the lost, the needy and the lonely.

We can learn from Christ as He met the woman of Samaria at the well. There was genuine friendliness and a desire to help. She sensed the earnestness of His love and concern. The genuineness of His in-

terest opened a door to her heart which had long been closed, and you remember the result. Not only this one woman but an entire village was touched and blessed by the Saviour's visitation.

People are looking for the love of the Saviour in the lives of His followers. Our missionaries often speak of how quickly the natives on our mission fields discern whether or not a new missionary loves them. That is also true here at home. Your love for those whom you would serve becomes the primary basis of your acceptance.

A Christian woman whose saintly life was a living witness and benediction to hundreds of people from all classes and walks of life made it a practice to offer this prayer at the beginning of each new day: "God, forgive me my sins; God, keep me humble; and, God, help me to love everybody I meet today." More of us would live the kind of a life that she lived if more of us would pray the kind of a prayer that she prayed.

### Joy

The second gift of the Holy Spirit is joy. A smile goes a long way. It is like a label which shows what is inside. Real joy adds a plus to your work and helps others to take their minds off their troubles as they come to know that the source of your cheerfulness is also available to them. A positive approach to people is good for your own morale as well as a "lift" to those with whom you deal. Cheerfulness is good medicine.

Billy Sunday used to say: "In order to be a Christian you don't have to have such a long face that you could eat your morning oatmeal out of a gas pipe." If our religion makes us look sick, it is not going to cure the world.

Church staff workers are often the receptionists of the church. Many will form their first opinions of the congregation through their initial contact with you. First impressions are often based on outward, superficial things—your smile, the neatness of your clothing, your bearing, the way that you stand or sit, the attitude toward your work which you unconsciously reveal. American life is lived at a fast pace. People do not always take time to make a studied judgment. It is doubly important that your outward life reveals the inner joy which is yours in Christ. Joy is contagious, perhaps more so than any other virtue. There is something infectious about a bright smile, a twinkle in the eye, a cheery greeting. Don't keep such good things to yourself! Let the light of your happiness shine forth for all to see, that others may glorify the God Who planted that joy in your heart. A radiant Christian who serves Christ gladly because His love dwells within his heart is the best possible advertisement for the reality of the Christian way of life.

## Peace

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you." (John 14:27)

There is much trouble and fear in the world. Some of it is bound to touch your life. Christ has not promised His followers immunity from life's trials. Yet Christians can be overcomers—not because the Lord has showed them the way to avoid all conflicts or a way to walk around them, but because He offers His grace and strength to enable us to rise above the world's miseries and triumph over them.

You will be reminded many times as you serve in a congregation of the deep need for peace in the hearts of men. The words of that old song which goes back to Civil War days can be applied to millions living today: "Many are the hearts that are waiting for the right to see the dawn of peace." Young men go into service; sickness and death bring anxiety and sorrow; the waywardness of a son or daughter breaks a parent's heart; a business recession brings economic reverses and threatens the security of a family; the frictions of personality upon personality—all are factors in this unrest.

Yet even these "disturbers of the peace" need not sabotage the life which is hid with Christ in God. When God's peace stands guard at the door, the Christian knows that he is safe no matter how severely the storm may rage. If it is true, as the Scriptures attest, that "neither powers nor principalities . . . nor life nor death can separate us from the love of God", then we know that our peace is based on something stronger and surer than the councils of men and nations. Only the willful disobedience of man and the harboring of secret, unforgiven sin can rob a child of God of the peace which passes all understanding.

The church staff worker, by the calmness of spirit and poise of bearing which marks his life, radiates this peace to others. It is a precious gift. You must help others to find it and know it, too!

## Patience

There is something picturesque about the older translation of this word—"longsuffering". Patience often involves suffering, although it must also be admitted that we suffer, too, because of our impatience.

Impatience is a damaging and destructive force within us while patience is a constructive, healing power. When we are tense it is hard to be patient. As we lay ourselves and our tasks into God's hands and wait relaxed—patience is there.

You will often sense your need of prayer at this very point. There will be days which will test your faith and your courage as by fire. There will be times when everything seems to go wrong. The plans

you had worked on for such a long time didn't "click". The volunteer help which had been promised failed to show up. A friend upon whom you had counted didn't come through. A keen sense of your own inadequacy threatens to convict you of personal failure. Discouragement and disillusionment set in. Yet these very trials may be God's chosen way of grinding off the rough edges of your life and personality so that you might become a more highly polished tool in His hands.

Seek to cultivate the long-range view. So much of the work entrusted to you can be accomplished only as you give the Holy Spirit time to work out His plan. God can grow a squash in a few weeks, but it takes years for an oak to be developed from an acorn. Think of how patient God has to be with us!

"Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him." (Psalm 37:7) This is not a call to quiescence nor an invitation to complacency. Yet the Scriptures do challenge us to do our very best and then trust in God for the rest. The patience of Jesus in His dealings with men has power to both surprise and inspire us. Pray for grace to become like Him in this virtue, also, for as the gift of patience is developed in your life the winsomeness and effectiveness of your witness will be multiplied many times over.

### **Kindness and Goodness**

You remember the little girl's prayer: "Dear Lord, make all the bad people good, and all the good people nice." Someone has said, "Be kind; nearly everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle."

We have already considered love as the key to all the other Christian graces. Kindness and goodness represent the projection and application of Christian love to the little, day-by-day incidents of life. These are gentle qualities but they call for real "manliness" of character. They reflect themselves in the sympathy with which we consider the needs of others, the sorrow and hurt of heart we feel when those with whom we deal are wounded in body, mind or spirit and the joy we experience when others are rejoicing.

As you work with people you will discover the importance of being a good listener. This has genuine therapeutic value. Even as the Lord must listen to the outpouring of our needs before He can speak to us through His Word, so we must pray for grace to be willing to listen to others before we seek to lead them into His will. There are countless ways in which we can give expression to the qualities of goodness and kindness, but there is no higher or finer way than this—to lend a sympathetic ear to a friend who turns to us for understanding and help.



Let us be careful, too, about being severe and censorious in our judgments of others. This is a special temptation to the veteran worker.

### **Faithfulness**

This is a beautiful word. We so often forget its real meaning: faithfulness involves fullness of faith. Here is all the proof we need that this quality of life cannot be developed in our own strength. It is indeed a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Faithfulness means many things. It means being true to our trust. It means being responsible—the quality of trustworthiness in our lives which leads others to know that they can count on us. It means “following through” on a task to its completion.

Paul said, “Let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart.” (Galatians 6:9) Here the Apostle clearly connects the virtue of faithfulness with its source. We can be true to our trust and follow through on our tasks as we have fullness of faith in the One Who promises to reward our faithfulness.

Christ knows the weakness of our human nature. He knows how easy it is for us to become enthusiastic about a cause and how hard it is for us to maintain that enthusiasm over the long pull. For example, there are days when we receive a tremendous lift from an afternoon of calling, but it takes real discipline to carry on a rigorous program of visitation day in and day out. The youth program may receive a great stimulation on Youth Sunday when the entire congregation is impressed by the witness given by the Luther Leaguers, but it takes rugged persistence and stick-to-it-iveness to follow through in young people's activities at those times when no one knows or appreciates the work being done.

“That a man be found faithful.” This virtue carries with it its own satisfactions and rewards. It is significant that the words the King used in His commendation of His servants were these: “Well done, good and faithful servant; You have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.” (Matthew 25:33).

### **Meekness**

Where a true follower of Christ is found, there also must be found a humble servant. Meekness does not imply timidity or cowardice. On the contrary, the word speaks the language of unusual courage and conviction, but it is the courage which comes as a fruit of your relationship to God and as a product of the conviction which is yours when Christ becomes everything to you.

Meekness does not spell defeat and death. It is rather a quality of life which has within it the seed of strength and power and victory. Jesus was meek. On Calvary's Cross, in the words of the Negro spiritual, "He never said a mumblin' word." Some men have confused His meekness with weakness; Christians know that He was never as strong—He was never more the Master—than on the day that He laid down His life for the world.

Meekness has been defined as "courage tempered with patience."

It is good that the Scriptures assure us that meekness is a gift of the Holy Spirit, for it is all too clear to us that this is another virtue which we cannot cultivate "on our own". Only as we live close to God and sense the gulf which exists between His holiness and our waywardness can He make us humble before Him. Only then can we know the blessedness which is the treasure of the meek in spirit. Make this your daily prayer: "Lord, take from me the need of being 'important' and wanting much praise."

### **Self-Control**

Today's world places great importance upon one's ability to live in superlatives and excesses. Christians, too, must live intensively but with self-control. That requires a Spirit-disciplined life.

Even enthusiasm, to be sustained, must be controlled and kept within bounds. Imagination is needed for every creative activity, but imagination, too, must be contained within the bounds of reality. Without initiative one would be nothing but a drone, sapping the energies of those with whom he works; but initiative, also, must know its limits.

God often guides through human controls. The advice of others can be helpful in guiding our feet into the right paths. Sanctified common sense can restore order to chaos, but personal self-discipline is the best "control" of all.

It is especially important that the church staff worker grows in this virtue because he must learn and live by the discipline of a definite schedule. There are few vocations in which punctuality is more important. When the calendar for the week calls for a dozen or more meetings or appointments the worker will have to practice the discipline of unfailing punctuality or pay the price in terms of a weakened service and witness to others.

### **Keep a Sparkle in Your Personality**

The church staff worker needs a rich measure of these fruits of the Spirit. In addition, he needs a further character trait—a sense of humor. There is no better oil to pour on many friction points.

There is a sense in which we can speak of Christian humor. It is not necessarily more restrained than other types but it has a different effect on our personalities and a different purpose in our lives. The Christian laughs with people—not at them. His humor is never like a snowball with a sharp stone hidden inside. It is kind, relaxing and aimed at bringing cheer to the lives of others as well as to himself.

The Christian avoids the type of humor which is at the expense of personality, purity or piety. He realizes that familiarity can breed contempt and that, unless he is very careful, his daily familiarity with sacred things can cause him to lose something of the sense of awe and reverence which becomes those who are dealing with the things of God.

We are called to be Christ's ambassadors, not His jesters. Spice is good in a meal but would make a poor main course. It is good that we guard ourselves lest, because of our ceaseless affability, our ministry loses its salt. This is an especially important consideration to the Christian who realizes that he is "on duty" twenty-four hours a day and "preaches" some of his most convincing sermons on his "time off".

The church staff worker needs time for leisure-hour activities. He may be tempted to think that he must work constantly in order to accomplish his goals within a given period. It is true that there is never a lack of things to do to fill the minutes of each day. Yet, he owes it to God, to others and to himself to take time for personal recreation and relaxation—he needs to take time to play as well as to pray.

Of course, the work itself offers rich social and recreational opportunities. (No one, for example, who is guiding a youth program will lack for exercise—or fun!) But in addition to these activities, it is important that he has his own private "kingdom" to which he can turn for needed re-creation of body and spirit. This may be in his apartment or home; it may be with the circle of his own intimate friends. He should not sever himself from these companionships; he needs them and they can contribute something to his life and work which nothing else can give.

He will naturally form friendships within the congregation. The best plan is to be a friend to all and not to tread too closely in personal circles. There are bound to be, of course, degrees of responsiveness in friendships. Care must be taken not to offend by making some feel "left out" of the circle of fellowship.

### **Reading and Hobbies**

One must take in, in order to give out. Cultivate the habit of reading a little each day. Your reading will perhaps fall into three areas—devotional, professional and reading for relaxation. Your Church

papers will offer something in each field. There are many good devotional books. Check with the pastor on books that he would recommend from his library. (Be sure to return them!) The books on your profession will include books on psychology, counselling methods, youth work, teaching methods, commentaries, Bible dictionaries, etc. For relaxation there is biography, poetry and fiction. Remember always the wise counsel of Abbe Dimnet: "Don't read good books; life is too short for that. Read only the best books!"

Almost everyone enjoys good music, whether his musical interests are passive or active. Some of you will work in communities where concerts are given periodically. All of you, of course, will have access to radios. Even TV can serve a useful function as you use discernment in selecting from the programs available. Many young people find both stimulation and relaxation in their hobby of collecting and playing phonograph records.

By all means, cultivate a hobby. It will offer fun, relaxation and a needed "change of pace" in the weekly schedule of activity. A hobby can be a means not only of re-creation but also for an enlarged witness.

If your work is of a nature which keeps you indoors much of the time it may be well to select a hobby which will give you an opportunity to enjoy outdoor recreation and exercise. It is important that you take good care of yourself physically.

Avoid, whenever possible, the use of your "day off" to do routine chores. Let that day be used creatively for personal renewal—to add to, not detract from, your zest for life.

### **Fellowship with Other Workers**

In addition to these personal pursuits there will be opportunities for fellowship with other church staff workers. The Association of Church Staff Workers is vitally interested in helping you to grow in your personal life, in your work and in your relationships with other workers. City-wide, regional and national meetings and institutes are held periodically. Attend these meetings whenever possible. (Congregations are constantly being encouraged to send their staff members to these institutes with their expenses paid and time spent in this way is not to be considered as part of the church staff worker's vacation.)

The attendance of church staff workers at Bible Camps, Leadership Schools and International Youth Conferences is very much to be desired. These activities can serve a triple purpose in your life—ministering, first of all, to your own spiritual life; secondly, increasing the effectiveness of your work with young people; and, thirdly, offering op-

portunity for personal renewal through the forming of new friendships and enjoying a week in a different "setting."

Do not neglect opportunities for further study. If you have ready access to a Bible School or college or university campus, investigate the possibilities of special or evening courses. Some communities offer special study courses or interest groups under the sponsorship of the local YMCA or YWCA or other community agencies. These classes can serve to broaden your knowledge and interests and thereby increase your usefulness.

The church staff worker is a Christian personality. Everything which helps you to grow as a Christian will help you to grow also in your effectiveness as His servant and witness.

### A Twinkle in My Eye

*God give me sympathy and sense,  
And help me keep my courage high;  
God give me calm and confidence,  
And please a twinkle in my eye.*



England's C. S. Lewis has aptly been called the "Apostle to the skeptics." This renowned writer in one of his great works, "The Screwtape Letters," describes Screwtape, a bureaucrat in the cosmic underworld, counseling a worried agent on earth whose intended victim had joined a church. "All is not lost," said Screwtape, "if the man's attention can be kept on little annoyances. But don't let him see **THE CHURCH WITH ALL HER BANNERS FLYING,**" he warned, "for that **IS A SIGHT AT WHICH ALL HELL TREMBLES.**"



#### **CHAPTER IV**

### **THE CHURCH STAFF WORKER AS A PART OF THE CONGREGATION, COMMUNITY AND THE CHURCH AT LARGE**

**“... and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)**

As a member of the church staff you are an integral part of the whole church family. Your influence will not be confined to the local congregation but will reach out into the community in which your church is located and even beyond the community into the wider sphere of the Church at large.

#### **As a Part of the Congregation**

The Christian Church has one aim and purpose—to unite all men, women and children in a common faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour and to enlist them in the task of extending His Kingdom on earth. However, because these same members are not untouched by the taint of sin, and because there are natural differences in individual personalities, a congregation is in reality a very heterogeneous organization. It must be remembered, too, that not every member is united to the Lord of the Church in a vital, living way.

Thus, as a church staff worker, you will find yourself enjoying many different types of relationships with the members of the congregation. You will feel that you are working **with** some of the members; that is, you will sense that they are your colleagues and co-workers in the great task of winning souls for Christ and His Church. You will be amazed at the number of consecrated men, women and youth who will volunteer their services in the great service of Christ. It is for you to be a good "personnel director", seeing the special gifts of each and finding a place where they can be invested in the Kingdom. It is good to challenge every person, young and old, with the thrilling, awesome fact that God has a plan for his life and that he will find his highest happiness as he places himself in the center of His will.

You will also find yourself working **for** many people. Some are yet to be won for Christ. Others belong only nominally to Him. These friends are not a part of your "force" as yet but are rather a part of your "field". This does not mean that you are called to be the judge and arbiter of the spirituality of others, but neither should you be blind to their deepest needs. You will want to be alert for every opportunity to lead these friends into a closer walk with their God and Saviour.

The more you work with people the more you will be amazed at the amount of kindness and Christian consideration there is in the world. Nevertheless, there are times when the church staff worker will find himself at variance with certain individuals. This is inevitable in a world like ours. Even the apostle Paul found himself differing with certain of his Christian brethren (notably Barnabas and Peter) on occasion. When such differences arise, it will help to remember these simple principles: Be humble, be patient, be calm, stand by your deepest convictions but remain "teachable" and ready always to re-examine your own position in the light of Scripture and the considered judgment of mature Christian friends. Consider carefully the counsel of the pastor. The church staff worker who goes humbly and diligently about his tasks, living close to his Lord, will experience something of the blessing which is God's own gift to the "peacemakers".

### **The Pastor Is Leader**

The pastor is the chosen leader of the congregation and the director of the work of the church staff whether he has one versatile parish worker or half a dozen members on his staff. He has been called and appointed by God to be the shepherd of the congregation. You have been called to assist him. If every member of the staff is steady in his resolve to serve and glorify Christ, the pastor can stand at the helm

and guide the work of the church with ease. It is important that you bear in mind that your work will be most effective in the measure in which you relieve and release him from many of the routine burdens of his task, so that he will be free to devote his time and energies more exclusively to his ministry.

Remember that the pastor is more than your "boss" who will give you your "marching orders" each day. He is also your pastor and he will be concerned about every phase of your well-being. You are to feel free to turn to him not only for practical advice on problems which arise in connection with your work but also for help in the spiritual issues which trouble your soul. He is no less eager to minister to you than to other members of the congregation; in fact, it will be of the greatest importance to him that you are happy and at peace in your own spiritual life. Even those who serve as counselors to others stand in need of the wise, thoughtful counsel of the shepherd of the congregation. Let your pastor be more than your boss; let him be—in a very real sense—your pastor, as well.

If it is true that you will look to your pastor for certain helps in the line of guidance and counsel, it is also true that he will look to you for certain qualities and gifts which will be your unique contribution to the program of the church. One pastor, a proven administrator, stated that there are four "C's" for which he looks in the lives of his staff:

1. **Consecration.** The mission of the church is a redemptive one. Its program is spiritual. It needs a spiritual leadership. Even the routine tasks are related to the plan of God for mankind. There is no substitute for the staff member's personal consecration, his individual relationship to the Master.

2. **Competence.** The pastor expects you to do your best—to be used to the utmost of your ability. He looks for a full day's work from you in return for a full day's pay. In addition, he wants to detect enthusiasm and eagerness in your life as you go out into the service of your King.

3. **Co-operation.** You are either a part of the pastor's problem or a part of his solution. The answer often lies in your willingness to think of yourself as a part of a team—a team in which only one person can call the signals. It is important that you are loyal to the pastor not only for his sake but for the church's sake. Disloyalty hinders the progress of the Kingdom. The impact which the staff makes upon the congregation and which the congregation makes upon the community depends on what the members of the staff are like in their relationships to each other.

4. **Confidence.** Here we do not have reference to your own feeling of self-satisfaction, although the type of sureness which has its roots in a glad trust in God has great power to motivate and energize Christian service. However, the point to be stressed is the imperative need on the part of the church staff worker to be able to **keep confidences**. There are times when words are golden but there are also times when silence is golden. By virtue of your position you have access to much information about people which must not under any circumstances be disclosed. Once the pastor or members of the congregation lose confidence in your ability to keep such a trust, once you violate such a confidence, your usefulness in that church is ended. Whatever you do, avoid gossip like a plague—it usually arises out of boredom or self-pity and has no justification in the life of one who would, in the words of Luther, “speak well of my neighbor and place the most charitable construction on all that he says and does.”

### **The Pastor's Family**

Church staff workers are not called to take the place of either the pastor or the pastor's wife in the work of the congregation. There need be no overlapping of duties nor conflict of status. The same loyalty which should characterize your relationship to the pastor should be extended to the members of his family. A spirit of mutual love and helpfulness in a more personal and intimate way may characterize this relationship. However, be careful not to presume upon the friendship of the pastor's family nor to invade the privacy of their personal home life.

Church staff workers almost invariably find in the pastor's family wonderful friends and receive through their contacts with the parsonage and its occupants many happy times and a great enrichment of life.

### **Relationship to the Church Boards**

The official call to service in a particular congregation is extended by the Church Council or Board of Administration. However, the pastor is the guiding force in the congregation and it is to him that you are primarily accountable in the practical working out of the church's program in which you have a part. The pastor should be responsible for the direction of the church staff and he is, in turn, responsible for it and for its work. Problems that arise should properly be related to the pastor who may choose, in some circumstances, to refer them, in turn, to the official governing bodies of the congregation. In no instance



should the church staff worker approach the Church Boards directly in any matter unless it is with the clear consent of the pastor.

The Board of Administration also has a definite responsibility to the church staff worker. It is important that the working conditions are favorable and conducive to pleasurable and efficient service. Proper equipment should be provided. A petty cash fund for small incidental expenses in connection with the work should be made available. Where a car is provided (or when the staff worker furnishes his own), there should be a clear statement (in writing) as to the allowances for maintenance and other expenses which are to be granted.

We rejoice over the growing awareness on the part of church boards that a fair salary scale commensurate with the church staff worker's education and experience is a rightful consideration. The worker is worthy of his hire, and adequate remuneration is necessary not only for the well-being of the individual but for the sake of the work to which he has been called. The fact that congregations recognize these principles is evidenced by the fact that increasing numbers of churches are offering their staff members such benefits as social security coverage, one day off each week and one month's vacation each year.

The official Church Boards should support the staff worker in every possible way. The worker, in turn, should welcome the co-operation and backing of the Boards. Should there be conflicting ideas or suggestions concerning the work from individual Board members, only those recommendations and decisions which have been officially agreed upon should be considered as binding. The spirit of teamwork should prevail in this sphere also.

### **Reports**

The nature and number of reports which are required of the church staff worker will vary in each local situation. In some instances, no written reports of any kind will be required. Sometimes the worker's personal (verbal) report to the pastor on his activities will be all that is required. However, in the case of a parish visitor, the Church Council may ask for a monthly written report. Or, if the parish secretary serves as the financial secretary of the congregation, a monthly report to the Board of Trustees will almost certainly be on the agenda.

An annual summary report to the congregation, to be submitted at the annual meeting, may be requested of the church staff worker. Occasionally this is mimeographed and sent out to every family in the church. The value of such a report lies in the picture it gives to the membership of the over-all activity of the staff member. Periodic re-

ports to the Boards have a value also in helping the leaders of the congregation interpret the work which is being accomplished. Sometimes the findings will be of such a nature as to suggest an entirely new approach in the division of the staff member's daily schedule of duties. Board members, on the basis of the submitted reports, may be led to suggest that another worker be added to the staff or that volunteer assistance should be mobilized, so that the church staff worker will have more time for visitation or for some of the other services for which he is especially qualified. These reports also help the worker to analyze and appraise his own service and to keep him "on his toes".

### **Relationships with Other Members of the Staff**

A clear-cut division of duties should be agreed upon by the pastor and Church Boards and drawn up in writing when two or more church staff workers are serving in the same congregation. This outline of duties will be subject to periodical analysis and revision but should be followed as long as it remains as the guide to individual spheres of responsibility.

Needless to say, the relationship between staff members should be one of unselfish, friendly co-operation. Where the human element makes such a relationship untenable, it would be better to effect the necessary changes in the personnel of the staff than that the entire congregation be embarrassed (and the work of Christ's Church be hindered) by dissension within the ranks. Undue criticism and jealousy could creep into even a church office if those who work there are not constantly on guard. Satan is ever alert for the unguarded, vulnerable spot. Beware lest the staff becomes the congregation's "Achilles' heel".

The practice of meeting daily with the pastor for a period of devotions, usually at the very start of the day's activity, is a splendid plan which should be considered as an almost indispensable part of the daily schedule. One congregation which employs in addition to the pastor a parish visitor, a parish secretary and a full-time sexton has been greatly enriched through the devotional practices of its four-member staff. Every morning, Monday through Friday, a fifteen-minute period is set aside for Scripture reading and prayer with each staff member (including the sexton) taking his turn as leader. Such a plan also affords a splendid opportunity for a "checking of signals" for the activities of the day. The pastor should meet with his staff at least once a week to outline plans and tasks which are to be carried out.

## **The Pastor Calls the Signals**

It is of the greatest importance to note that in a well-planned, efficiently operating church office, there can be no "criss-crossing" of orders between church staff members. Let it be an inviolate rule that the pastor alone decides "who is going to do what" as far as the responsibilities of the staff are concerned. Think in terms of a wheel with a number of spokes running out from the hub to the rim. The hub represents the pastor; the points at which the spokes meet the rim represent the other members of the staff. In a well-ordered office, requests for help and other services never run around the rim from one spoke to the other, but always are channeled up one spoke to the hub and then down the other spoke to the rim. There can be only one quarterback on a team. Let the pastor call the signals!

The pastor can do much to protect the members of his staff by making clear to the Board of Administration and the congregation that no one is to turn over any assignments to any person on the staff without first clearing such matters with him.

Incidentally, the Youth Office is making plans to have discussions on how to make the best possible use of church staff workers at future pastoral conferences, and to hold special sessions with pastors who are employing (or contemplating the employment of) church staff workers at District and Conference meetings as well as at the biennial Youth Conferences.

Since every congregation has its own peculiar setup, it is impossible to set forth a clear-cut series of rules governing the interrelationships of staff members which will be a safe guide for every situation. The following suggestions concerning the relationship of a parish worker to the office secretary, the intern and other members of the staff are simply indicative of some of the general principles which are involved and which may be kept in mind in determining similar relationships in other settings.

### **The Relationship of the Parish Worker to the Office Secretary**

When the congregation employs an office secretary, either on a part-time or full-time basis, the parish worker is usually relieved of the responsibility of carrying out the routine work of the office, such as the preparation of bulletins, answering the phone, handling the mailings of the congregation, etc. However, there are times when in the press of work the pastor will ask her to lend a hand in these activities, and when this is the case she should respond with a willing and ready spirit. It is important that she does not consider her work to be of a more important nature than that of the secretary and that she does not think of her ministry as being more "spiritual" than that

which is done in the office. Each worker is called to a needful task, and no differentiation is to be made as to the relative contribution which each person is making. Rather, let all serve to the glory of the Lord, and the work of the congregation will go forward in harmony, happiness and effectiveness.

### **The Relationship of the Parish Worker to the Intern**

The intern (a seminary student furthering his preparation for the ministry by serving for one year as an assistant to the pastor in a local congregation) is a member of the church staff on a slightly different basis than the other members of the staff. For one thing, the fact that he is placed on the field to learn as well as to serve (and to learn as he serves) must be kept in mind. Secondly, the fact that his period of service is limited to a period of one year places him in a different situation from those on the staff whose periods of service are longer. It should be remembered that most interns have been out of close touch with the intimate life and work of a local congregation for as much as six years—the period represented by their college and seminary training. Thus, in a very real sense, they are being initiated into the day-by-day work of the church. Although they are the recipients of the finest education and training which the Church can provide, they need to learn at firsthand the intricacies of congregational life and activity. The parish worker can play an important role in that learning process.

Remember, the least obtrusive help is the most effective. It's the quiet, "behind the scenes" guidance which will be the most greatly appreciated. The alert church staff worker will also learn much from the intern; it is always a two-way process.

### **The Relationship of the Parish Worker to Other Staff Members**

In addition to parish workers, office secretaries and interns, many larger congregations also employ full-time directors of Christian education, youth directors and ministers of music. The larger the staff, the greater are the opportunities for an intensive service to the congregation. It is also true that with a larger staff the chances for personal misunderstandings and frictions are greater. It is at this point that the administrative ability of the pastor is put to the test. Happily, because those who are eager to serve Christ and His Church have learned to appreciate their fellow workers, to pray with them and for them and to rejoice in the successes and victories of one another, the record in almost every congregational staff has been a story of harmony, cooperation and efficiency by a "team" of workers devoted to Christ. Nothing which has been written above is to be interpreted to mean that such teamwork among staff members is the exception rather than



the rule. It is good to be reminded, however, of Satan's desire to "conquer by dividing" and of our need to live out in our lives the fruits of the Holy Spirit in order that Christ might be glorified through our service.

### **Activity in Church Organizations**

The church staff worker, as a member of the congregation, is eligible to belong to any and all of the organizations of the church appropriate to his age and sex. It would be well to confer with the pastor, however, before making specific commitments concerning this type of activity. Much depends upon your schedule and the demands of your work. As time permits, it would be well for you to participate in the organizational life of the congregation, not only because of what you can share with others but because of what you can receive by way of fellowship and inspiration for your own life. Whether it is the Young Adult League, the Brotherhood, the W. M. S. or the Senior Choir—each organization needs the boost which your active participation will bring, and each organization, in turn, can make its own contribution to your own church life. Take care, however, lest you commit yourself to this type of activity beyond the limits allowed by your work. Except in rare instances it would be well for you to disallow your name to be presented as a candidate for office (especially the office of president) in any of these organizations. It is better to encourage the development of lay leadership from the rank and file of the members of the congregation.

### **As a Christian Steward**

As a member of the local congregation you will, of course, participate in its support. Even as the pastor signs an annual pledge card and contributes each week through the regular Sunday envelopes toward the local and benevolent program of the church, so you as a staff worker will be eager to participate generously and joyfully in the Lord's work as a Christian steward. The degree of such participation must be your own personal decision. The church staff worker, by virtue of his position, can greatly influence the stewardship attitudes of the members of the congregation. Your attitude and example will mean much to others and can be a witness which will help many members, young and old, to grow in their experience and exercise of the privileges of an all-out stewardship of time, talents and treasures.

### **The Church Staff Worker During a Vacancy in the Congregation**

When a pastor moves from one parish to another there is a period of vacancy in the local congregation which is rarely less than three



months in duration and which can last for a considerably longer period—even up to a year or more—before the new pastor arrives on the scene to carry on the work. The responsibilities and opportunities of the church staff worker are intensified many times over during this period.

When a pastor resigns, the congregation upon voting to accept his resignation also elects a neighboring pastor in the District to serve the church as vice-pastor. The Church Council is responsible for the task of arranging for Sunday pulpit supply in the vacated parish. The vice-pastor, however, exercises the same jurisdiction over the official business of the church as a regular pastor does. He presides over the congregational meetings, is responsible for the ministerial acts (although he may delegate this authority to the supply pastor or to another neighboring pastor), and keeps the records of congregational membership and ministerial acts up to date.

During the vacancy the church staff worker assumes many of the day-to-day functions of the regular pastor. He will find that the members of the church will turn instinctively to him for the guidance and help which the pastor formerly supplied. He will also assist the organizations of the church to carry on their functions. Luther League counselors really “prove” themselves during a vacancy. The counselors and the church staff worker can do much to keep up the morale of the young people and encourage and guide them in their work in order that the League might not only continue but actually thrive during the period of vacancy.

During this period the church staff worker will work in close relationship with the Board of Administration and the vice pastor. His efforts will mean much in keeping the life of the church maintained at a high level, so that when a new pastor is called and arrives to take up the spiritual leadership of the congregation he will not find it necessary to start a new program “from scratch” but will be able to build on the work which had been begun and maintained.

It is of the utmost importance that the church staff worker exercise an unusual amount of tact, patience and common sense during the vacancy. He will avoid at all costs the temptation to influence individual members or the congregation as a whole in the calling of a new pastor. The selection of a candidate for a vacancy is the prerogative of the pastor (or vice pastor) and the Church Council, and the church staff worker should not project himself into the picture.

There is perhaps no other time when the efforts of the church staff worker are as greatly needed and appreciated as during a period of vacancy. Although the hours may be longer and the work more exacting, the satisfaction of knowing that you are in a place of service and

leadership during a critical period in the life of the congregation is reward enough for the service you will render.

Let it be said at this point that a magnificent job has been done by those who have served a congregation during a period of vacancy. Many a church can testify to the fact that the work in the congregation was carried on with amazing effectiveness and that the morale of the members remained high throughout the vacancy because of the splendid leadership of the church staff worker during that difficult period.

Normally, when a parish is vacant the congregation will await the arrival of the new pastor before extending a call to a new church staff worker. In the event that a worker is called to a congregation that is without a pastor, it is strongly urged that such a person check with the Youth Office before accepting the call. This precautionary measure is advocated for the protection of both the church staff worker and the congregation involved.

### **As a Part of the Community**

Living in a given community rightly involves the assumption of certain responsibilities as a Christian citizen. Indeed, you have been sent as a witness for Christ to that community. Your field is broader than the congregation which salaries you; it reaches out into the wider area of the territory in which your church is located and, even beyond that, unto "the uttermost parts of the earth."

Needless to say, as an American you will not neglect your voting privilege; you will seek to make it a matter of intelligent participation in civic and national affairs. Community projects that are in harmony with Christian ideals should be supported and encouraged, for the Church has a definite mission to perform in the specific area in which it is located. In this connection it is a good plan to be informed sufficiently about the purposes and projects of civic organizations to guide those who may seek your counsel as to their worthiness. Right choices often demand real discernment and wisdom. Make sure that Christ and His Church continue to represent the highest loyalty of your people.

The church staff worker's participation in civic and community affairs is of necessity limited because of the prior demands of his specific calling. So many times the most difficult choices which we must make in life are not between that which is evil and that which is good, but between that which is good and that which is best. The example of your life as you seek constantly to devote yourself to the work of the Kingdom will be a guiding and steadying influence upon the congregation and will often "set the pace" which others will follow.

Take care lest you spread yourself too thin by taking on a multitude of "extra-curricular" activities and responsibilities with the result that you lose striking power in your primary task which is in the parish you serve.

In the matter of co-operation with other Protestant churches in the community, the policy will be determined by the pastor, in consultation with the Church Council, and you will rightly respect and honor such decisions.

The Youth Office has a series of studies relative to inter-church and ecumenical youth activities which will be helpful in determining relationships in this area. Write to the Youth Office for this material.

### **The Church Staff Worker and the Church at Large**

The roots of the Church of Jesus Christ are in the local parish, but the branches spread far and wide. The branches flourish in direct proportion to the nourishment received through the roots. It is the living faith of local church members that gives life and virility to the total outreach of the Church in its great American and overseas mission.

It is easy to become "short-sighted" and provincial in viewpoint if one does not have this larger vision of God's plan and purpose for His Church in the world. As a church staff worker you have the unique privilege and opportunity to interpret the task of the Church at large to the local congregation. Yours is the responsibility of familiarizing yourself with the Church's total program by reading carefully the Church's periodicals, including *The Lutheran Companion* (published weekly), *The Augustana Annual*, your own Conference publication, and the literature prepared by the boards and agencies of the Church, such as *All Yours*, published quarterly by the Augustana Luther League, *Mission Tidings*, published monthly by the W. M. S., and *The Church School Teacher* published monthly by the Board of Parish Education.

When you are conversant with the larger work of the Church you will:

**Know its missions**—the fields, the needs, the missionaries, the Boards and agencies and how they work.

**Know its appeals**—the purpose and goal of Lutheran World Action; why an Augustana Mission Advance offering is needed each year; what the responsibility of the local congregation is in the support of the Church college; why the Church has a mission in the field of Christian hospitals, homes for the aged, children's homes, etc. Your own attitude toward these causes will figure largely in your interpretation of these appeals to others. If you feel that the various financial ingatherings for these important needs are "necessary evils", that attitude will be reflected in your life and speech and will be influential in

determining the degree in which others will participate in these appeals. On the other hand, if you are convinced in your own heart that Christians have a call from God to extend the ministry of the Church into every area of human need, that conviction will do more to help others to catch the vision than almost any number of formal talks supporting a particular appeal for funds. You can be the pastor's most valued supporter and ally in rallying a congregation to participate generously and joyfully in the total benevolent program of the Church. We should realize that we are only scratching the surface of our stewardship possibilities; there are Church bodies in America outgiving us 3½ to 1.

**Know its colleges**—what they have to offer young people as a “plus”, over and beyond what can be received on the campus of a secular college or university. A church staff worker is in an enviable position to give guidance to youth in the choices they are to make concerning their education and, ultimately, their vocation. It is not enough to offer passively such guidance as may be asked for; you should earnestly seek out opportunities to bear your witness in this important respect.

Make use of all the vocational guidance materials available from the Youth Office, including filmstrips as well as booklets.

**Know its institutions of mercy**—where they are, what they do, whom they serve—and our Church's great work in the field of social missions.

**Know its organizational structure**—at the District, Conference and Church-wide levels. Encourage participation in District rallies, Conference conventions, Church School teachers' institutes, youth Leadership Schools, Bible Camps and International Youth Conferences.

Your knowledge and interpretation of these larger phases of the ministry of the Church will help others to see with greater clarity that Christ calls His people to serve Him not only in “Jerusalem”, but “in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.”

It is time we ceased to study the difficulties and began to envision the opportunities. When the Israelites came to the borders of the Promised Land they sent out an advance party to determine what dangers lay ahead. They returned with two widely varying reports. The majority report was discouraging. "There are giants in the land," they cried, "and we are as grasshoppers in their sight!" Caleb brought a minority report. "There ARE giants in the land," he said, realistically, "and their cities are walled and very great, but we are well able to overcome it." The difference was a matter of perspective. The majority saw the problem in terms of their own weakness; "There are giants in the land and we are IN THEIR SIGHT as grasshoppers." Caleb saw the difficulties in terms of God's strength; "There are giants in the land and they are IN GOD'S SIGHT as grasshoppers."





## CHAPTER V

### THE PARISH WORKER

"Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness." (Romans 12:6-8)

Parish work is the swiftest growing of all the church professions. The opportunities for creative Christian service in this vocation are literally unlimited.

The parish worker is, in a very real sense, an assistant to the pastor. Her duties are varied and challenging. As a rule, they center around four distinct areas of service: office work, visitation, Christian education and youth work.

Most congregations which employ just one full-time staff worker call a parish worker to assist the pastor in the four areas mentioned above. Where two staff workers are employed by a congregation, the parish worker generally concentrates on visitation, Christian education and youth work while the other staff member assumes the secretarial tasks of the church office under the title of parish secretary.

## No Humdrum Routine

It is impossible to suggest a "typical" outline of the duties and responsibilities of the parish worker because the schedule of activities will differ in each local situation. This is of necessity the case for a number of reasons. Every congregation is different. Every pastor is different. Every parish worker is different in her interests and aptitudes. Even the program and emphasis of the local church will differ from year to year. Thus the parish worker becomes a part of a dynamic, ever-changing scene which permits her to make use of her versatile talents to tremendous advantage in the work of the Kingdom.

Very often a pastor will sense that his parish worker has very special gifts in one or two of the areas in which she is engaged and will encourage her to devote major attention to those services. For example, it may become evident that the parish worker has an unusually happy and effective "rapport" with the young people of the congregation; in that case the pastor would want her to plan her weekly schedule in such a way that she could use this special talent to best advantage. Or, it may be that the parish worker has a personality that lends itself best to the visitation of members and prospective members of the church. As the pastor senses the direction of her talents he will be in a position to suggest the areas in which she should concentrate the greatest measure of her time.

## Preparation for Other Service

As the parish worker grows in her work (and no other vocation offers greater opportunity for personal growth), she may be led to build upon the experience she has enjoyed as a parish worker in moving on to a more specialized assignment. Many church staff workers who started out as parish workers in their first congregations have gone on to serve as parish visitors, youth directors, or overseas missionaries in their second or third calls. Thus, parish work is not only a varied and creative work in its own right; it can also be a valuable "training ground" for a more specialized service in the future.

In a similar way, there have been many cases of individuals who started out as church office secretaries who have gone on from that initial assignment into full-orbed parish work. Others, after a period of service as field missionaries (assisting the Regional Directors of American Missions by conducting community surveys and helping new missions get started), are eagerly sought out by local congregations to fill positions as parish workers. Fortified by the rich experience they gained through their traveling assignments, these workers are ideally equipped to render a valuable service to a local church.

As previously indicated, the parish worker's responsibility usually revolves around the four areas of office work, visitation, youth work and Christian education. The opportunities for effective service in each of these areas will be described in detail in the following four chapters, and present and potential parish workers are referred to those pages for further information on the specific services related to these areas.

### **Redeeming the Time**

There are a number of considerations, however, which are peculiarly pertinent to the vocation of the parish worker and which should be mentioned here. There is, for example, the matter of establishing a realistic time budget for the activities of each day. The multiple-service nature of her work calls for an unusual amount of self-discipline on the part of the parish worker. Facing many demands and opportunities for service each day—each of which represents a challenging task worthy in itself of the very best that she has to offer—may cause the beginning parish worker to be so overwhelmed by the magnitude of her work that she becomes fearful of her ability to do all that is expected of her. As she takes inventory of the many projects which call for her personal attention in a given week—or even in a given day—the attainment of every goal may appear to be beyond her reach.

This, as we have suggested, may be the experience of the **novitiate**. The experienced parish worker has learned how to practice a wise stewardship of time and a thoughtful discipline of self in order to use every golden moment to best advantage. This is not a secret which is readily worked out "on paper." There is no sure "formula" by which it may be passed on from one person to another. It is, rather, a lesson which is learned "on the job" through personal experience in the work itself.

### **Things to Remember**

Some principles, however, seem to apply in every situation. It is always mandatory for the parish worker to plan carefully in advance her schedule of activities in the light of the immediate needs and opportunities within the parish situation. She must learn how to combine a number of "errands" with each trip from the office in order to save valuable time. If, for example, she is scheduled to be in a certain home for a League committee meeting one evening, she can plan to make a call or two in the same neighborhood before or after the meeting.

Another principle, perhaps paradoxical in nature, which should be remembered is that a job which is left half (or even three-quarters)

done can be the costliest project of the entire day as far as the time factor is concerned. Either the job will remain in its uncompleted state, which will offer little satisfaction to the worker, or it will have to be completed at a later date (when the staff member has her mind on other projects and has less time and inclination than ever to see the original task through to completion). The "follow through" is as important in parish work as it is in basketball.

It must be remembered, too, that the task is limitless. Always one has the feeling: "So much to do; so little done." We work up to the limit of our capacity but with the deep inner feeling of peace that comes from being partners with God and from realizing that it is His work, not ours.

### **Her Greatest Service**

The most important consideration of all is the necessity of the parish worker to enlist and train volunteers from the congregation to assist her in her work. The alert parish worker will be a teacher of the teachers, a counselor of the counselors, and a leader of the leaders. Such a plan enables the parish worker to accomplish a much greater service; it also represents a very important means of strengthening the membership of the church by increasing its corps of willing and equipped workers. There is no service the parish worker can render which will be of more lasting value to the congregation than the training of members for leadership roles in the church.

There may be times when the parish worker will feel: "It would be faster to do this myself than to take the time to show Bill and Mary how to do it." More is involved, however, than mere technical efficiency. By taking time to help Bill and Mary and many other volunteers in the congregation, the parish worker is demonstrating a **concern for individuals** which is essentially the basic privilege and responsibility of every church staff worker. Through such contacts innumerable counseling opportunities will unfold. Also, in the training of a corps of volunteer workers the parish worker is contributing a service which will be of blessing to the congregation long after the parish worker herself has moved on to another parish or has become a Christian home maker.

For all of these reasons, the suggestions in the following pages on such subjects as mobilizing the congregation for parish evangelism, securing volunteers to help with the routine tasks of the church office, developing a strong corps of Church School leaders and teachers and enlisting and training adults to serve as counselors of the Luther Leagues have added weight and urgency when applied to the central task and opportunity of the parish worker.



There is an impressive turnover of church staff workers into Christian homemaking, and that is natural and fine. These young ladies, happy and growing in their personalities, full of the joy of creative Christian living and getting to know literally hundreds of people both in the congregation and in the community, naturally find their matrimonial opportunities enhanced. As Christian wives and mothers they continue to serve their Lord and their Church and their lives are greatly and permanently enriched because of the experiences they have enjoyed as church staff workers.

### **Parish Work's Greatest Appeal**

Let not any reader be deterred from this calling because of the multiple-nature of the work. It is this very fact—that parish work involves such a variety of intriguing opportunities for service—which gives this vocation its greatest appeal. It would be difficult to imagine a more creative assignment. The open doors for personal growth while rendering a significant service for Christ and His Church are a source of constant amazement to the parish worker. She will often be led to exclaim: "Why, I'm doing things right now that I never dreamed I could do!"

Working with people of all ages—guiding, counseling, teaching, visiting, all to the one purpose of pointing souls to the One Who alone can make life worth living—the parish worker glows with an inner happiness and radiance for she knows herself to be an adventurer with Christ!

### **DO YOU AGREE?**

Someone has thoughtfully said, "The only person worse than a quitter is a person who is afraid to begin."



Said a young lady from East Germany, expelled from school for not giving up her Church youth group:

“People tell you to put your hand into the hand of Christ. It’s easy enough to do that when in your other hand you hold your pass to school. But when you hold nothing and you have to put both hands into the hands of Christ, then you really meet Him.”



## CHAPTER VI

### THE PARISH VISITOR

**“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” (James 1:27)**

Visitation is basic to our Lord's work on earth. He Himself came personally to accomplish our salvation. He has commissioned us to go out personally with His message.

There are many different types of parish visitation which will be described in this chapter but all have basically the same purpose—to bring a Christian witness in a personal way to others. There may be secondary, related purposes as you go in and out of homes inviting children to Sunday School, bringing cheer and comfort to the sick and sorrowing, encouraging young and old to be faithful in the Father's Business and bringing counsel to those who seek help with their daily problems, but always the primary purpose of your call is that others might know Christ and be found in Him. As a parish visitor you have a rich opportunity to bear such a witness.

Visitation, when it is done in Christ's Name, is more than an expression of social friendliness; it is the sowing of a seed from which eternal life may spring. While only Christ can perform the miracle of regeneration in the human heart, He uses human instruments to plant

the seed of the Word in the hearts and lives of men. This is your sacred privilege as a parish visitor.

We will consider ten types of parish visitation. An average day will find the visitor engaging in several of these types. Even a single call will often have more than one purpose as, for instance, a visit to a Sunday School child who has been absent may also be a means of interesting the parents in the pastor's adult instruction class.

### **Some General Considerations**

**Plan your calls in advance.** In the interest of your own stewardship of time as well as for the sake of the work, it is essential that you make careful preparation for your day's activity; in fact, it is a good plan to make an over-all schedule of visitation to embrace an entire week, or even a whole month, at a time. This schedule must be sufficiently flexible, of course, to allow for the necessary variations which will be required because of special or emergency situations.

You will find it practical to give certain calls the priority in each day's visitation, and it then becomes the part of wisdom to plan your other visits around them. These "must" calls will often determine the geographical area in which you will concentrate on that day.

Whenever possible, make advance appointments with the families you are to visit. A housewife who is in the midst of housecleaning or a mother who is battling against great odds in trying to get her young children off to school in time may not appreciate a "surprise" call from the parish visitor. She will be much more receptive and responsive if she knows in advance that you are coming.

As a rule it is also a good plan to keep your visits as brief as possible, taking care, of course, that you take time to fulfill the visit's primary purpose. While some enjoy nothing more than to "put on a pot of coffee" and settle down with the visitor for a good session of chatting which can easily run into an hour or even longer, others are more keenly sensitive to the demands of their own time schedule for the day. The over-all impression of your visit will usually be more favorable if you leave "too soon" rather than stay too long, providing that you have had an opportunity to interpret the purpose of your visit. And, of course, one or two "extended" calls during a day will play havoc with your own time schedule!

Another factor, sometimes overlooked, is the fact that the church staff worker who is careless in the stewardship of her time is really giving a negative witness concerning the work the Lord has called her to do. On the other hand, the parish visitor who sticks conscientiously to her job encourages respect for the church which she represents.

In a larger city it is usually advantageous to plan your calls according to geographical considerations rather than solely by the type or purpose of the calls to be made. For example, you would find yourself losing valuable time if you chose to devote one day to calling on the sick, another day to visiting the shut-ins, a third day to looking up prospective members, etc., regardless of where these people lived. It would be better to plan to concentrate your calls for one day on the southeastern part of the parish, for example, and to plan during the course of that day to visit as many of the sick, the shut-ins and the prospects as possible. Such a plan will add considerable spice and variety to your daily schedule, too—a fact which you will learn to appreciate as you grow in your work.

There are times, however, when you will want to concentrate on a particular type of call. For instance, a few weeks prior to Vacation Church School or before the beginning of a new Church School year you may want to give your time almost exclusively to a visitation of homes in which there are children. However, even when you are out on these calls you will certainly want to be alert for other needs in the homes in which you are calling.

### **Other Considerations**

As far as possible, make your call at a time convenient to the person or family being visited.

Introduce yourself.

Be friendly, cheerful, tactful.

Be a good listener.

Be alert—your original purpose in calling on that home may not represent that family's greatest need.

Be positive and constructive in your conversation. Do not gossip.

Show a real interest in those you are visiting.

Notice something which you can commend—children, flowers, sewing, neatness of home, etc.

Be interested in their neighbors, too; they may be unchurched.

Leave an appropriate tract. On the next visit, discuss the tract, if possible.

If this is a first call, be sure to jot down names, addresses and other pertinent information necessary for the follow-up.

### **The Follow-Up**

Jot down important comments, promises which you made to call again, to bring something, to call for a child, etc. Confer with the pastor on matters which should be called to his attention. Inform mem-

bers of the church in the same neighborhood of this family—of its interests and needs. Refer information to some other church in the community if such procedure is called for.

## **Records**

Records are valuable and should be kept of all calls. However, keep them simple and functional. Do not allow record-keeping to become overly complicated and time-consuming so that the tail wags the dog!

Card files are usually the simplest and most adjustable to varying circumstances. Some use colored cards, each color having a definite significance. Thus a certain amount of information is seen at a single, quick glance.

The keeping of records has several points of value. It imposes a certain discipline upon you. It records certain information for future use. It forms the basis for reports to either pastor or Board.

Do not record confidential material on your regular records unless your records are strictly confidential. It is of utmost importance to keep confidences with absolute integrity.

## **I. SURVEY CALLS**

There are two methods of getting a comprehensive view of a community in relation to the church through a survey:

A. A general Church survey as carried out by the Board of American Missions to gain information about a new area in order to determine whether a new mission or church is needed.

B. A survey as conducted by a local church to increase its working knowledge of its own community and area of responsibility.

There is also the continuous survey type of calling referred to as "prospect calling"—seeking the unreached families in the community and trying to bring them into the fellowship of the Church.

### **A. The General Church Survey**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of a general church survey is to see whether the Church is supplying the needs of its people in a given area and also fulfilling its missionary responsibility and thus determine whether a new church or mission is needed in that locality.



## Method

The Board of American Missions carries on surveys through the field missionaries serving under the supervision of the Regional Director. New areas throughout the country are outlined for survey. A worker is called, briefed on the following points and sent out to make a house-to-house canvass:

**1. Approach.** Introduce yourself by name and give your position as a Church survey worker. Friendliness is extremely important. You come as a complete stranger. There are two possibilities: either you will return to that home on a follow-up call—if so, you will want to return as a friend; or you “will not pass this way again”, in which case you will want this one brief contact to be a “sweet savor” for Christ. In a few moments of conversation you will either remain a stranger or become a friend who has brought good news and hope for more satisfying living.

**2. Gathering specific information.** To get an insight into the spiritual needs of the community you will need a brief “family history” of each home, including the family name and address as well as the names of each member of the family, their church affiliation and their degree of interest in the Church. You should get as much pertinent information as they are willing to give, but you should not pry for information. There may be many valid reasons why some people are hesitant to give information. Be sure that you respect their individual rights in regard to this matter. Undue forwardness would only result in antagonism.

**3. Evaluating results.** You have made hundreds of calls. You have been gratefully and hopefully received by some. You have met with indifference on the part of others. Now comes the task of evaluating the information you have received and getting it into workable form for processing and follow-up.

Sorting the cards is usually done first according to: a) member of a Lutheran Church, b) other Protestant denomination, c) Catholic, d) unchurched. Secondly, according to: a) very interested, b) prospect, c) not a prospect.

Determine what follow-up calls should be made and who should make them. In a general Church survey the follow-up is usually done by the survey worker.

**4. Making the follow-up calls.** If a new church or mission is to be established there will be much intensive work ahead. Your follow-up calls will involve giving information as well as getting better acquainted with the people. Explain the purpose and function of the Church, its services both in the sense of the worship of God and its

ministry to humanity in all areas of life. Explain the doctrines of the Church, its program of Christian education offered through the Sunday School, youth program, adult instruction classes. Tell about its organizational life and give assurance that there is a place for every member of the family in its program.

### B. A Local Survey in an Established Congregation

There are times when it becomes apparent that a congregation should get a clearer view of its field. The movement of population or rapid growth in the community has made it advisable to conduct a house-to-house canvass.

Youth organizations may help in such a survey. It is best not to use the youth below Senior High School age, as they are not sufficiently mature for this important assignment. When older youth are used they should be carefully briefed before being sent out. Teach them by the demonstration method, actually simulating several typical calls.

Young married couples are also ideal for this work. Strive to get enough visitors so that the job does not appear to be an overwhelming one.

Help on methods of procedure and materials for the survey can be obtained through your Church's Board of American Missions. In a few instances the pastor may want to prepare his own information sheet and have it mimeographed or printed. There may be an immediate and special reason for the survey so that a locally-prepared card would be best.

## II. PROSPECT CALLS

"And I have other sheep that are not of this fold; I must bring them also." (John 10:16)

The Church must be constantly aware of the fact that all sheep do not have a shepherd. Millions are scattered and we must find them. The survey type of call which is made as you go about your regular program of visitation is an expression of that constant alertness for the lost and hitherto unreached which we call "prospect calling". We must search as diligently for the unchurched as the Good Shepherd did. Often we need only to open our eyes and we will see them near at hand. Perhaps a little child playing along the street is curious to know who you are and what you do, and in chatting you invite him to "come and see". He comes to Sunday School the next Sunday and you have an open door to that family. Or you may see a moving van unloading

at a house in your area, and you take note of the address and return in a few days for a friendly visit and to invite the family to worship in your church.

On the other hand, it may take tremendous effort to reach some who have hardened themselves against Christ and His Church. Whether near to the Kingdom or far from it, these scattered ones are not found and won without much prayerful and persistent effort.

### **Where Prospects Are Found**

**1. Pastoral Acts.** To a Christian, attendance at weddings, baptisms and funerals can be deepening experiences. But there are those who have no interest in the Church until such events as these cause them to turn to the Church and its ministry. These are experiences that, although very sacred in their true meaning, have become to many only church-related traditions and practices.

Regardless of the spiritual understanding or interest of the participants, a church wedding today is the accepted social custom and thus becomes an opportunity for the Church's witness. There will be marriages of members with non-members and marriages where both bride and groom are entirely unchurched.

The same is true of baptism. Even though the true meaning of this sacrament is not known or understood by everyone, it is a widely accepted thing to have a "christening" service. Thus another door is opened for an effectual witness.

Rarely is the Church ignored in the event of the death of a loved one even though the churchly ties of the deceased and his family may have been remote or even non-existent. Hearts are often very receptive to the Christian message at such times. Surely all of these events represent the Church's responsibility. The pastor has a special opportunity to confront those contacted in this way with Christ's claim on them by revealing to them the true meaning of these events in their lives. Remember, if they have not known the Shepherd they will not be interested beyond the immediate service rendered by the Church unless you show a continued interest in them. Follow through on the contacts thus made.

**2. Sunday School.** Many parents think it is all right for the children to go to Sunday School, but they would not consider going to church themselves; some insist that their children go because "it is good for them" but fail to remember to keep the Sabbath Day holy in their own lives.

Do not discount the truth of that Bible passage—"And a little child shall lead them." When the little ones are led into the Church, the parents often follow.

Recognize the non-member contacts through Sunday School children as a rich source of prospects for the Lord and His Church. Do not become weary when the response is not eager. Diligently and repeatedly seek out every one. Some day there will be a harvest.

**3. Guest Book.** A guest book in the narthex of the church with an alert and friendly couple in charge to greet visitors as they come is usually more effective than visitors' cards in the pew racks, as it gives an added personal touch. If possible, bring these names to the pastor before the end of the service so that he may have the names in mind as he meets them at the door.

**4. Ushers.** Some churches have ushers or other selected "greeters" whose names are listed in the bulletin each Sunday. They are responsible for extending a hearty welcome to visitors, a "welcome back" to members who have been ill or away and special friendliness to new members as they help them to get acquainted with other members of the church.

**5. "Welcome Wagon" and Related Community Projects as Prospect Finders.** The city or community in which you work will probably have various means of keeping track of newcomers, movement of people within the city, removals, etc.

The "Welcome Wagon" is a method used in some communities to supply business houses and churches with the names of families moving into the community and their records often reveal the church preferences of these newcomers.

Some communities publish a weekly directory giving notice of newcomers, changes within the cities, and removals. Such lists are also helpful in keeping your mailing lists up to date. There is yet much room for improvement in training church members to notify the church office when they change their address and to report new families in their neighborhoods.

**6. Roll Call and Visitors' Cards.** Some churches like the method of setting aside a certain month of the year as "Roll Call Month" when every worshipper signs a card during each service he attends. A follow-up can then be made on all visitors. Having visitors' cards in the pew racks is also one method of giving opportunity for visitors to signify their presence. This method lacks the friendly, personal touch of many other methods, but it does give visitors an opportunity to signify their desire for a personal call from the pastor or parish visitor.

**7. Every Member of the Church Must Be on the Alert.** It must become the business of every Christian to keep watch for prospective members. The church that best serves the community is the one in which all members are missionaries. Organize the members for effec-



tive parish evangelism. Having your church organized according to districts with key members as lay visitors in each district is an excellent plan. These visitors should be given the names of all newcomers or prospects in their areas and make contacts and help to establish friendships among prospects and members.

Responsibility for such organization may be given to various individuals or groups including:

The Board of Deacons, each Deacon being responsible for a definite geographical district of the church's membership;

A Parish Evangelism Committee, elected or appointed by the Board of Administration to supervise this work;

Women's groups, the Brotherhood and Luther League. Smaller group meetings are much more adaptable for getting acquainted. Encourage definite alertness on the part of women's, men's and youth organizations in inviting the unchurched and newcomers in their neighborhoods. But do not permit members to stop there. We must not be satisfied nor allow others to become satisfied with anything short of the goal, a definite relationship on the part of the "prospect" to Christ and His Church;

"One Win One" commitments. There are many individuals within the church who because of work, home responsibilities, distance, health or a variety of reasons, cannot fit into the group plans for parish evangelism. No one need be excluded from a "One Win One" program;

A series of receptions for prospects in the parsonage or church parlors will give newcomers an opportunity to become better acquainted with members and each other. Fellowship suppers to which the entire congregation is invited (either at one time or in sections) with special emphasis on having prospects present will help to draw them into the family circle of the church.

However your organization setup may work out, the important thing is that the work of evangelism is done and done constantly and effectively so that souls are won for the Master. Lay people are the real missionaries in the church. They have a vital contribution to make in the evangelism program. When approached by a lay member, the newcomer in a community has the feeling of a contact **within** the church, a relationship not as easily established between a "professional" pastor or church staff worker and a prospect.

### **Follow-Up**

The follow-up on prospect calls is of utmost importance. It often determines the ultimate response in the hearts and minds of the prospects. Your follow-up will place the stamp of sincerity and earnestness upon your original contact.



The goal of prospect visitation is to reach people for Christ in order that they might join the fellowship of believers in the Church. Remember the order. The rites of church membership imply that the members have been won for Christ.

There must be instruction in the way of salvation and in the duties and privileges of church membership. Some books often used by pastors in giving instruction may also be helpful to the visitor. The following are especially recommended: *What a Church Member Should Know* by Zinck, *Lutheran Worship* by Bergendoff and *Luther's Small Catechism*.

### **What You May Expect As You Knock At Doors**

Every day and everywhere you will meet these prospects for the Kingdom of God. Perhaps it is the person next door or someone in the office; maybe it is a friend or possibly someone within your own family who doesn't know the joy of a partnership with God in Christ which is the key to real living. They may be fine people in the eyes of the world, succeed in their business, lead a decent life, perhaps come to church once in a while or send their children to Church School, but there is something lacking.

There are those who avow themselves to be agnostics, who openly scoff at the Church and its followers, but you won't find many of these deluded folk.

There are more who are simply indifferent, who just cannot be bothered, who find something else to take their time.

Some say, "Why, I don't need the church; I'm a good person; I can worship God just as well in the out-of-doors while hunting or on the golf course."

There are those who had "just too much religion crammed down my throat" when young. They have "graduated" from church.

There are those who judge all churches and ministers by some bitter mistake experienced in the past (usually many years ago).

There is the person who is "just too busy" to be bothered by spiritual matters. And don't forget the Sunday morning "sleeper" who finds the Lord's Day the only morning in which he can take advantage of that favorite indoor sport. Still others claim that Sunday is the only possible day they can catch up on all the "odd jobs" around the house or yard.

There are those who are always "shopping around". To them, churchgoing is a novelty, not an experience of real value. And some insist that a church a few blocks away is "too far away"!

Others constantly put off the decision. They say, "Yes, but some other time, not now."

Too many claim membership in a church "back home"—even if they left that community years ago. They don't realize that it is more important to have a church home than it is to have a home church.

On the other hand you will find those who are desperately seeking, who want something real, who know their need for a Shepherd for their souls.

You must not be indifferent to these cries nor excuse yourself from answering them. Examine yourself as to your interest in them and your love for them. Your sincere concern for them will be the key. There may be no immediate response on their part. Remember, they may have had no interest in the church whatsoever until you opened up this rich treasure to them. Be patient, persistent and courageous. Christ died for them because He loved them. Do not let your love cool at the first discouragement or rebuff. "Love never ends." (I Corinthians 13:8)

As they are won and received into membership, put them to work. A working church is a living church. Faith must be put into action.

### III. SICK CALLS

The visitation of the sick represents a needed and appreciated ministry. It is clearly in harmony with the Saviour's plan and spirit, for He was concerned about the whole man—body, soul and spirit.

Be cheerful in your approach, for you serve a Christ Who said, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world!" Faith in Him will give you the right kind of cheerfulness; not a giddy or flippant spirit but one which has real healing power.

It is good to have some idea of the sick person's state of mind as well as his physical condition. Obtain what helpful information you can from doctors, nurses, relatives and friends. Such information must be carefully secured. You will not want to be guilty of prying for information that you are not entitled to have. Remember, all information that you receive is not necessarily correct or pertinent. Nevertheless, it can be helpful as a guide for what you will say and do during your call.

You must do more than just "mean well". Zeal cannot take the place of good judgment and common sense. Make sure, first of all, that you do no harm. Limit yourself to the services that you can perform, and do not presume to attempt things that are not within your field.

You may be asked to call upon a person with whom you have had no previous contact. Seek common interests in your approach. There

is often evidence of the patient's interests near at hand, such as a photograph, a book or some type of handwork. Let the patient himself lead the way as much as possible. To press yourself too much into the conversation will tend to bring out the expected responses rather than the true, and important facts will be withheld.

### **You Are Not the Doctor**

It is important to establish confidence in your integrity, your concern and your ability to help in the specific situation. Do not claim expert knowledge of the patient's malady or physical condition. Remember to take care of **your** business while you are with the patient and leave the doctor's and nurse's business to them.

No one method of approach can be applied universally. People are different and their experiences, backgrounds, likes and attitudes are different. Thus one cannot establish a method of approach that fits all occasions. The help that you give should tend toward building in the patient a personal faith in God which will prove sufficient for him in his hour of testing.

Remember that the person is sick. This will have a bearing on the length of your visit. Because of his weakened condition, the patient may find it very difficult to "visit" or even give any response to the visitor. Do not assume that apathy necessarily means a lack of interest in spiritual things or a lack of faith. A brief passage from God's Word and a short prayer will often do more for the patient than a lengthy visit could ever do.

When the patient is convalescing, he will appreciate a longer visit. If there is a prolonged convalescence, the attention of friends may diminish, and loneliness may overwhelm him. It is then that you should plan your visit so as not to be in too much of a hurry. The person may need a good listener to whom he can tell his story. To some, the need and desire to unburden their hearts becomes a therapeutic necessity. It takes time to perform this listening ministry. In cultivating this art you can be of much value to the busy pastor.

### **IV. HOSPITAL VISITATION**

The patient is in the hospital because he needs the rest, help and medication or surgery that doctors, nurses and other hospital personnel can offer. They must be permitted to do their work. Try to call during regular visiting hours and give due attention to all hospital rules. These rules exist for the good of the patient.

A few "don'ts" should be remembered: Don't weary the patient.

Don't argue. Don't prescribe treatment. Don't bump the bed or otherwise jar the patient. Don't criticize his doctor and thus destroy the confidence which is essential to recovery.

Nearly all sick folks need encouragement. They need a "lift" for their faith, a helping hand, a bit of hope and cheer. The visitor should endeavor to bring this type of therapy to the patient. This means a careful choice of topics of conversation. That last operation that "did not turn out so well" or the death of a good friend who had an ailment similar to that of the patient may be of interest to you but is of doubtful help to the one to whom you are ministering.

When a person is ill, doubts and perplexities that would not ordinarily bother him may creep in. You should do all that you can to strengthen faith. The doubts that are evidenced may be a result of bodily weakness or mental depression. However, even if you have not known the person before and do not know whether or not he is a Christian, do not hesitate to point the way to the Saviour. If he knows the way, his faith will be strengthened by hearing the gospel again. He will be reassured as to the foundations of his faith, and his doubts and fears will be alleviated. If he doesn't know the way, he needs a spiritual counselor to point him to Christ.

Spiritual and emotional problems can be distressingly complex. You will come up against problems greater than your abilities to meet them. Have the grace and good judgment to refer such to those who are more qualified to deal with them. Be quick to seek the counsel of the pastor in such instances.

In summary, your objectives will be: to cheer, to strengthen faith and always to lead to Christ, the Healer of both bodies and souls.

### **They Are Entitled to the Best**

There is much literature printed for the sick and shut-ins. Some of it is good and some is not. It is best to make it a rule to clear the material that you use with the pastor. Take care that you do not use material that is doctrinally unsound or that is clumsy in approach or unattractive in appearance. The sick and shut-ins, deprived of many other things, are entitled to the best material to read.

The Bible heads the list, of course. Often one who is sick cannot handle a whole Bible or even a Testament. The use of "Bible Portions" published by the American Bible Society is an effective method of encouraging and facilitating the reading of the Bible. They are light and easy to handle which is a great advantage to one lying in bed. They are small and take up little space on stands and in drawers. They are inexpensive and can thus be easily replaced if lost or soiled. Use an



edition with clear, large type. In spite of the fact that they may have greatly neglected the Bible, most people revere it as the Word of God. The reading of the Scriptures and the offering of a simple, earnest prayer is the best spiritual therapy. The Word of God is a means of grace and conveys His truth and mercy to the soul. It is thus your most important ally and tool.

Two books which will be very helpful to the visitor are *Nurse, Pastor, and Patient* by Granger Westberg and *The Lord Thy Healer* by J. Sheatsley. The former book contains much valuable counsel on how to minister to people who have inner problems which have affected their health. The latter book is a collection of Bible passages and prayers appropriate for people having many different needs. It will help you to know what to read and how to pray with those on whom you call.

There are also many good tracts. Be sure that you are personally familiar with the contents of any tract used and that you say a few words to motivate interest before leaving it with a patient.

## V. SHUT-INS AND AGED

There are many different reasons why people are confined to their homes and are therefore unable to take part in the activities and services of the church. It may be due to old age with resulting lack of strength and energy; it may be due to illness or more or less chronic infirmity. The incapacitation may have been gradual with normal adjustment to the situation, or it may have been sudden and decisive without warning. In a few tragic instances the person may have known nothing but helpless confinement for most of his life.

Whatever the case may be, real skill is needed to understand each situation and help to work out a solution to each problem. Whether occasioned by the infirmities of old age or by sudden illness or accident, persons finding themselves completely helpless and perhaps without hope of recovery need the understanding, cheerful and loving ministrations of the parish visitor.

### **Be Regular and Frequent in Your Visits**

Whenever possible, plan your call so that it need not be hurried. The acutely ill are often showered with attention even beyond what is good for them or what they really desire, but when illness becomes prolonged the enthusiasm of friends often lags. Shut-ins and the aged often suffer most from sheer loneliness and boredom.



## **Be a Good Listener**

It is true that these folks will want to hear about the church services and activities and any bits of news you can bring to them. Yet so often they have had many hours alone with much time to think and no one with whom they can talk. They will want to pour out their hearts to you. Give them a chance to express themselves.

## **Be Quick to Suggest Activities**

Some will enjoy reading. Share with them the very best books and reading material. If the church does not have a library, perhaps one of the organizations would like to establish one so that good books can be available for these friends who cannot come to the church for inspiration and edification. Be prepared to recommend good radio (and/or TV) programs, too, especially the finest religious broadcasts.

Some will want to be busy with their hands. The church kitchen may need dish towels hemmed or new pot holders. The primary room may need new curtains or the nursery some stuffed animals. These things which can be done as a direct service to the church bring real satisfaction to those who have formerly been very active in the work of the church. Visit the library and look over books on crafts. There are many simple crafts which can be done with even limited physical ability. You will be rewarded for any effort you put forth in finding things for these folks to do. The satisfaction of seeing their joy in their service and usefulness is more than sufficient pay for the time and work you invest in this way.

Some have been blessed with means and look for ways to share. Do not hesitate to challenge them with worth-while stewardship opportunities, such as Lutheran World Action, Augustana Mission Advance, adding books to the Luther League library, giving for on-to-camp or youth convention funds, helping a youth to attend Bible School or college, etc. Such projects bring rich satisfaction and joy to those who are able and willing to carry them out.

Some may need activities which will be a means of earning a little money. Get in touch with industries that provide home-earning projects if there are such in your community.

## **All Can Pray!**

Prayer is the greatest of all work in the Kingdom of God. Reassure those with helpless hands or aching knees of the tremendous power of prayer, of its effectiveness in accomplishing great things for God. Enroll these praying Christians as prayer partners, sharing with them definite prayer projects. (Be sure to share the answers with

them, too!) You will need the support of prayer; the pastor needs intercession for his many duties and responsibilities; others who are sick and in special need should be on the congregation's prayer list. Devotional guides like *The Home Altar* and *The Uniting Word* can stimulate greater faithfulness in intercessory prayer as well as greater regularity in daily Bible reading.

The alert parish visitor will make it a point to bring a band of Leaguers along on her calls to the shut-ins from time to time. This will mean much to those being visited, who often feel cut off from contact with members and friends of the congregation. It will mean much to the youth, too, to have the privilege of sharing their witness in this way. Leaguers could join in singing a few favorite hymns and could also conduct the devotions. Copies of *The Uniting Word* could be distributed and the shut-ins could be encouraged to be intercessors in behalf of the congregation's youth program. Carolling during the Christmas season represents only one opportunity for a ministry of this nature; give the youth a chance to share their witness at other times during the year, too.

## VI. VISITING THE SORROWING AND THE BEREAVED

The parish visitor will often find that the most difficult of all calls to make is the one which brings her into a home recently visited by the angel of death. This will be especially true in the case of the church staff worker who is new to her job and cannot build upon the resources of past experiences in this type of counseling ministry.

In most instances it is best that the pastor make the initial call on the bereaved. This is true for a number of reasons. The family needs the comfort and counsel which the pastor, by virtue of his position and calling, is peculiarly qualified to give. Then, too, there are the practical considerations which must be taken care of—arrangements for the funeral services, notification of relatives, etc.

However, there will be times when, because of the pastor's absence from the parish or his inability to make the call for other reasons, the parish visitor will be the first representative of the church to call at the home. In a sense, you make such a visit in a dual capacity—as a friend eager to express sympathy to a family mourning the death of a loved one, and as an ambassador of Christ and His Church desiring to share the comfort and hope of His gospel with those in sorrow and need.

Unless you have been authorized to do so, you will not proceed with the making of arrangements for the funeral services, although you may consult with the family as to their wishes and report the same

to the pastor. However, you will recognize that the bereaved family stands in deepest need of the comfort of the Word of God and of prayer. You will want to read appropriate selections, such as the 23rd, 91st and other Psalms, portions of John 14 and I Corinthians 15 and other passages which speak of the themes of death and eternity. In your prayer you will seek to bring the sorrowing to the very throne of grace where He Who is the Resurrection and the Life can wipe all tears from every eye.

This first call will not be a lengthy one. It is best to confine it to a brief, sincere expression of sympathy, leading to a searching of the Scriptures and a word of prayer. Very often the bereaved family is in a state of semi-shock, and while they will be most appreciative of your call and most grateful for the informal devotional service, they are not ready for any extended or involved conversation, even about spiritual matters. That must wait for a later time.

### **After the Funeral**

It is the call at the home after the funeral which is often most needful and helpful. This is a call which is usually within the domain of the parish visitor. The initial state of shock has worn off, the excitement relative to the making of plans and decisions has subsided, the invasion of relatives and friends is a thing of the past—sometimes it is not until four or five days after the death of a loved one that the bereaved have an opportunity to ponder the issues which their recent experience have pointed up in their lives; it is often not until then that they realize their loneliness and their loss.

Here, surely, is an open door of blessed service! The visit to the home after the funeral should be an unhurried one. Again, words of condolence are in order and it is at this point that one's greatest opportunity is found to point the sorrowing to Him Who is the God of all comfort and hope. Thoughtfully, reverently, the visitor guides the conversation into a calm, hope-filled discussion of the blessed hope which is ours in the gospel. The prayer that "this visitation of death may be Thy voice speaking to us, ministering unto a truer and holier life in our souls" is often answered during such a visit.

Some persons at a time of bereavement will respond slowly to the ministrations of the church. This does not necessarily imply a lacking of faith. Because some people are more emotionally sensitive than others, their sorrow may appear to be without surcease. Yet God, in His mercy, has given man, in addition to His Word of promise, the therapy of time as a great healer. The parent who insists that he will never be reconciled to the loss of a child or the wife who fails to detect any benevolence in the Hand which snatched her husband from the

land of the living may appear to be untouched by the ministry of the Word. Yet the resources of a humble, child-like trust in God are not to be denied and in His own way the Father will comfort and keep His children. He is patient and will lead them, step by step, into not only a renewal but even into a deepening of their faith in His goodness and love.

In addition to the words which the Holy Spirit will give her to speak, the parish visitor can often be most helpful in assuaging the grief of a stricken family by bringing the mourners into touch with some other member of the congregation who has recently undergone a similar bereavement and has found victory through faith. In such instances the best approach would be to suggest to "Mrs. Adams" (who lost her husband a few months ago) that she stop over to see "Mrs. Clark" (whose helpmeet died a week ago) in order to help her find comfort and peace in the experience of God's mercy and grace.

## VII. SOCIAL MISSION CALLS

You may serve in an area where many economically underprivileged families live. They will have many problems of physical and material need as well as the basic need of Christ in their lives.

Many times the problems must be handled by trained social workers. There are involvements of county, state and federal agencies which require professional handling. You should be familiar with the functions of these agencies and know how and to whom to make the necessary referrals. Get acquainted with the welfare agencies of your community. Seek out first your own Church agencies. The workers in these agencies will be of much help to you as they will share your desire to help these people in a spiritual as well as a material way.

There will be those who need food and clothing, medical care, a place to live, employment, and other physical necessities. Remember, our Lord said, "inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Let Him be seen in you as you reach out to these human needs.

## VIII. EVERY-MEMBER VISITATIONS

There are so many demands for calls on the sick, shut-ins, etc., that there is a danger of neglecting other members of the congregation, unless a special need arises or a definite effort is made. Usually the church is not adequately staffed to reach the entire congregation regularly. There are often long lapses between visits.

Special effort is often put forth to have an every-member visitation



during Lent, or perhaps in the fall of the year. If all members are to be visited within a few weeks there must be a planned program of evangelism using the lay members of the church. As the seventy were sent out two by two, so your church can send out members in teams of two. The experience of laymen who have gone out in this way has been very similar to that of the disciples—"They returned with joy". It is not difficult to imagine that among the seventy there were many who reasoned that it was impossible for them to go out and visit others in the interest of the Kingdom. So it will be in your church, but once the visitors participate they, too, will return rejoicing for having had that privilege of service.

Young adults can well be used in such visitation. Prepare them with helpful suggestions as to approach, review doctrinal truths, give them timely Christian literature to give to those they visit, and remind them of the various organizations in the church and their functions so that they can advise others how they can fit into the active work of the church. These visitors will also, of course, invite members and friends to services, mid-week Bible study and prayer hours and the special meetings of the church that are held from time to time. It is also a good idea to have youth call on youth.

Some plan of regular and sustained visitation among the church members is necessary. This cannot be done by one or two people, however. It takes the combined efforts of the pastor, parish visitor, Board of Administration, evangelism committee and every willing heart and hand to build up the fellowship of believers.

## IX. SUNDAY SCHOOL CALLS

Sunday school visitation opens up many golden opportunities. Your calls will bring you into many unchurched homes where Christ has never gained entrance. You will be bringing Him with you in your calls. Let Him be seen and known through you.

There will be various reasons for your calls. It may be to make arrangements for the baptism of a child. That will be an opportunity to explain the meaning of baptism and give a witness as to the new life in Christ.

You may be calling on absentees. In unchurched homes absences are often caused by the sheer indifference of the parents. The child may be completely on his own as to whether he gets to Sunday school. It requires patience and persistent encouragement in dealing with the child to remedy this situation. The parents need Christ, too, but they may not be very receptive on your first visit. Make them curious to know more by the very glow of your presence in the home. It may be



in sharp contrast to the atmosphere of the home and will be like a breath of fresh air.

Sickness may be the cause for absence. Your genuine interest and concern means much to the parents. The cheerfulness you can bring to the child will be a real blessing. Children usually have a very high regard for their Sunday school teacher or anyone from the church. You are a representative of the Jesus they love. Whatever the reason that brings you to their home, the children invariably love to have you come. **It is an open door.**

Make careful and prayerful preparation. Observe the general rules of good visitation previously discussed. Be alert to detect the individual needs of the child in the home. Do not let the call be exclusively a Sunday school call but show interest in all members of the family circle. Remember that the children have already been scattering seed in the hearts of their parents who may be growing in their realization that spiritual needs go beyond the time of childhood. Bring with you any Sunday school papers or leaflets that the children may have missed. Have leaflets that will give the parents an insight into the work of the Sunday school.

You may wonder if you should have devotions in the home. Do not miss the opportunity if it presents itself, but do not force a situation. There may be some circumstances that will indicate you should not read from the Scriptures or pray on this particular visit. It is well to ask the permission of the parents before having devotions.

## X. PERSONAL COUNSELING

Church members are exposed to the problems and trials of life even as non-believers are. These difficulties do not always appear on the surface of things. It usually takes an understanding heart to discern them.

The problems of the home can become very complicated and entangled. Not all parents have equal gifts of management, understanding of children and the many things that go into a smooth operation of a home. It is best, of course, if guidance can be given along the way, before problems get out of hand. The Church has a responsibility to help its members find solutions to the problems of the home and family. God Himself established the home. The family circle is of His ordaining. Who is in a better position to help than the pastor? It may be your privilege to point the way for couples to seek his help.

There are the problems of mixed marriages. A Christian wife may need much help and encouragement, for example, to live with and witness to an unbelieving husband—or vice versa.

There are the problems related to carrying Christian convictions into the business world. Is lawful business always honorable? What about my example to my children? There are problems, too, of an economic nature.

In every area of life, the Church must give the answer. We are His ambassadors. What could challenge you more than to be a parish visitor!

### A Prayer for Everyday

*Make me too brave to lie or be unkind.  
Make me too understanding, too, to mind  
The little hurts companions give, and friends,  
The careless hurts that no one quite intends.  
Make me too thoughtful to hurt others so.  
Help me to know  
The inmost hearts of those for whom I care,  
Their secret wishes, all the loads they bear,  
That I may add my courage to their own.  
May I make lonely folks feel less alone,  
And happy ones a little happier yet.  
May I forget  
What ought to be forgotten; and recall  
Unfailing, all  
That ought to be recalled, each kindly thing,  
Forgetting what might sting.  
To all upon my way,  
Day after day,  
Let me be joy, be hope! Let my life sing!*

—MARY CAROL DAVIES

## TO A PARISH SECRETARY

I Chronicles 4:23

My potter's wheel, my hedge, is where  
I see a desk and office chair,  
And well I know my Lord is there.

And all my work is for a King,  
Who gives His potter songs to sing,  
Contented songs, through everything.

And nothing is too small to tell  
To Him with Whom I always dwell,  
My Counsellor, Emmanuel.

O Lord, Thy choice is good to me,  
It is a happy thing to be  
Here in my office—here with Thee.

—Dohnavur Song



## CHAPTER VII

### THE PARISH OR CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARY

**"All things should be done decently and in order." (I Corinthians 14:40)**

**". . . rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ." (Colossians 2:5)**

"You can glorify God on a typewriter." He can use that logical, systematic mind of yours to bring order, harmony and efficiency to a church office. He can place you in a position of service in which you will find a rich, satisfying, creative outlet for your God-given talents and energies. Yours will also be the reward of knowing that through your service the pastor or executive is being released from the burden of countless details in order to give more time and thought to the specific work to which he has been called.

Of course, the world is full of business offices, and God can be served and glorified by a consecrated secretary in a secular as well as a church office. The fact that there is such a crying need for parish and church office secretaries would seem to indicate, however, that God has this specialized calling in mind for many young women and that He is looking to them to pass through this open door of service in His Church.

Let there be no qualms on the part of the person who hesitates to dedicate her life to this particular service because she believes that it

is not as directly related to our Master's commission to go and make disciples as the calling, for example, of the parish visitor. Whether we bear our witness with our voice or with our hands is not the important issue. It is our love for Christ and the earnestness of our dedication to Him which really matters. The consecrated secretary is in every sense an evangelist—testifying with her life and with her work that Christ is eminently worthy of man's faith and allegiance.

Many a pastor or general church executive will testify as to what a blessing an efficient, dedicated secretary can be, how she relieves his mind of a thousand details, enabling him to render greater service in his field. Our church offices have a vast amount of detail which must be taken care of, lest the work of the gospel and the business of the Church be seriously impeded both at home and overseas. Blessed is that secretary who has found her place in a church office. She can invest her abilities in the various routine procedures common to any office, all the while enjoying that rich and satisfying blessing of sensing a creative partnership with God in His Kingdom work.

### **A Purposeful Work**

If you are, or plan to train to be, an office secretary, God needs you. You can join hands with Him in a church office and have the joy of doing a great task. You will be part of a program which is vital and always full of human interest. There is no drudgery or "sameness" in a work where eternal souls are constantly in the picture. Every file card you touch contains the name of a personality in whom you have a personal interest and for whom you are deeply concerned. Every turn of the mimeograph prepares important material for the Master's work. Every click of the typewriter has meaning and purpose for His Kingdom.

There must be a keen sense of team work. A good secretary can "clear the way" of many details and give the pastor such good team support that many otherwise unattainable goals can be reached. In releasing him so that he will have more time for sermon preparation, for persons who have real needs, for visitation and writing tasks, you are in truth performing a mighty ministry unto the Lord of the Church.

In basketball, the star player can score 30 or more points in a game only when the other members of the team are faithfully doing their part in setting up the plays. In football, it may be the left halfback who runs for the touchdown but the way has to be cleared by the men playing in the line. The important thing is not who makes the points but that the entire team is working together as a unit in order that the game might be won. So it is in the church office.



A secretary's work may seem to be in the shadow, but how great is the importance of shadows! In a painting it is often the shadows which bring out the high point of the picture. The pastor (and other staff workers, too) is also working in the shadow—in the shadow of the Cross! Let us not be concerned about how dark the shadow but how great the Light!

Moses had to learn that God could use him and his shepherd's rod in the work of the Kingdom. Possibly the typewriter or the mimeograph is your rod. Shorthand, filing, bookkeeping, mimeographing, etc., may seem drab on the surface, but they can be transfigured through God's call into a glorious means of serving Christ and His Church. This principle also applies to a host of other services which can be rendered to the church which, seemingly, are not directly related to the work of evangelism but which play an important part in the ongoing work of Christ's Church on earth.

Very often the secretary serves to co-ordinate the work of the church office, so that everything can operate smoothly, with a minimum of friction and tension. Often she develops an amazing knowledge of the work of the Church and thereby is able to render a service in countless other ways as well.

You will need both a microscopic and a telescopic view of your work. Those small and seemingly insignificant details should be seen and cared for with microscopic accuracy but also recognized to be a part of the great work of God's Kingdom advance. From such a vantage point, church secretaries find their work has a real "plus".

### Qualifications

Parish secretaries do not necessarily need college training—some have entered into this field right after high school or after a year of business school. It is good for high school girls to learn some skills like typing, shorthand, bookkeeping or music.

If you would be a parish or office secretary, you must have the same basic spiritual qualifications as other church staff workers. A positive Christian faith and personality are as important to a church secretary as to a parish visitor or youth director. It is the Lord's business and it is serious business! It calls for a Spirit-guided and controlled life. We think of the secular world. In spite of seemingly tremendous activity and teeming success, we realize that much of it is only a pinning of artificial leaves on dead branches. For "even this will pass away." Not so with the Church of Jesus Christ! Each "leaf" is alive with vitality and purpose because it grows on a branch which is a part of the Living Vine. So the church office, though it has the same file cards, mimeograph paper and office machinery—all the me-

chanics of an ordinary office—is not an ordinary place in which to work. It has life, for it deals with the Word of Life!

It is not enough to know your Lord and to be acquainted with His Word. You should have a broad knowledge of the whole program of His Church. Knowing the history of the local church and the contemporary program of the Church at large will give you a rich background for work in the local parish. As in any business, you need to know something of the “company” you work for if you are to do your best.

The church secretary must practice the same carefulness and diligence in constantly preparing herself for better service as other servants of the living God. Those guarded quiet hours, that alert reading of Church papers, a keeping up on the latest procedures in the efficient handling of an office, together with living fruitfully among the people you serve are all a part of your service for Christ in a church office.

Basic knowledge of office skills is essential, of course. You need “know-how” with respect to the typewriter, adding machine, addressograph, mimeograph, systematic record keeping, filing and bookkeeping. A knowledge of shorthand, while not always a “must,” will increase your usefulness.

This is not a textbook in office skills. However, some helps are in order. Our purpose here is to suggest some ways in which your acquired knowledge and skill may be used in a church office to greatest advantage.

### **Correspondence**

All pastors have a considerable amount of correspondence; some carry on an unusually large amount. You will need a working knowledge of letter composition, spelling, grammar, etc. (And you will also need to keep a dictionary handy!) The mail is often confidential. A great deal of confidence is placed in the secretary. You must be worthy of such trust and never betray a confidence.

There will be letters of a general business nature to other pastors and to District, Conference and Church officials. Keep your various official church reports handy and be familiar with how and where to find various items of information. There will be many times when the entire membership of the church will be reached by letters regarding matters of local and Church-wide import. There will be letters to those in military service; to youth away at school; perhaps a personal letter to members on their birthdays; and many, many others.

The three keys to efficiency in handling the pastor's correspondence might be summarized in the words: accuracy, neatness, initiative.

**Accuracy** is important for obvious reasons. Any error in spelling

or punctuation will reflect upon the one whose signature will appear at the bottom of the page as well as on the one who typed the letter.

**Neatness** is important because the letters you type often represent not only the views of the pastor but the position of the church of which he is the spiritual leader. They will go out in the Name of Christ to perform a service for Him. Have you ever seen a window display—say, in a gospel mission—in which the Bible was covered with dust and the effectiveness of the entire display was marred because of a litter of dirt which covered the whole scene? Such a window is unworthy of its purpose which is to call attention to the services which are being conducted inside the building. It fails to attract the passerby; it may even repel him. There is a sense in which a letter is a “show window” by which the church or office will be judged. It leaves an impression upon the reader which will be either favorable or unfavorable. Any smudges, obvious erasures or similar tokens of undue carelessness or haste will often counteract the writer’s best intentions. Through her neatness in little things, the conscientious secretary will seek to bear her witness and glorify her Lord.

**Initiative** is important because through its exercise the secretary will greatly enhance her value to the pastor and to the church. Sports writers often refer to certain key games as representing the test which will “separate the men from the boys.” There is no phrase which is the counterpart in the field in which we are now dealing, but a similar principle prevails. Some secretaries are exceedingly accurate and neat in their work but confine their activities to the simple carrying-out of specific orders. They will do only what they are told to do. The test of a secretary’s value often lies in her ability to exercise foresight in initiating certain tasks on her own. Her experience, background, knowledge of the work of the church and of her specific office qualify her to suggest new ways in which a certain program can be carried out or a given task can be done. Her alertness in developing her gifts as a creative writer, for example, will often enable the pastor to turn over to her many of the jobs for which he was formerly responsible, such as the preparation of copy for the Sunday bulletins, weekly church paper, letters to the congregation, etc. The secretary who takes advantage of such opportunities for a larger service will usually find that there is no “ceiling” to the possibilities for creative work connected with her position.

### **Mimeographing**

The mimeograph is usually a much-used, often-maligned machine in a church office. The typewriter and mimeoscope go hand in hand with it. The proper cutting of stencils is an art. Make your stencil work the very best it can be. The Sunday bulletin is a real handmaid

of the church, helping the worshippers follow the order of service and keeping the membership accurately informed and reminded of church activities from Sunday to Sunday. The neatness of your bulletin is a reflection of the importance you attach to the worship and work of the church.

Many churches publish a weekly or monthly paper. This may be printed commercially or mimeographed in the church office. In either case, the material will be prepared in the church office. The pastor is usually the editor, but if the secretary or other staff workers have journalistic gifts they may also have a part in preparing various parts of the material. The secretary will undoubtedly type the copy. Learn the simple art of making both right and left-hand margins on a two column page; pay attention to such things as centering the copy correctly. To avoid tearing or getting the stencil in crooked, put a folded sheet of thin paper over the edge when inserting the stencil sideways into a typewriter. Of course, you will try to avoid mistakes on your stencil, but they will happen! Correct them properly and they won't show. Note carefully the position of the line in regard to your typewriter "line space indicator", so that it can be lined up correctly after the correction has been made.

### **This, Too, Is Your Witness**

Even, firm typing is essential for the clear cutting of a stencil; proper inking is necessary for clear printing. Keep your equipment clean. Clogged type and mimeograph pads can only result in poor work. Aim for work that excels. That, too, is part of your witness.

Stylus work with tracings or drawings takes practice (and considerable time!) but can easily be mastered and will add much to reading appeal. The young folks will like to use illustrations in their Luther League paper and on announcement cards for their meetings. Other organizations, Brotherhood, Junior Missionary, etc., will also frequently use mimeographed cards or letters for publicity. Unless someone in the organization is qualified to operate the office equipment, it is advisable for the secretary to be the sole operator rather than allow amateur experimentation with expensive machines. However, let the organization members do as much of the work as possible. Why not train some Leaguers in the operation of the mimeograph? So many of them would be thrilled at the chance to help you!

Companies which sell and service mimeographs and related equipment will give instruction and keep you informed on latest processes and new equipment for mimeograph work. It may take more time to learn and practice the right way of doing things, but in the long run it takes less time and is much more satisfying as well as much more effective to do this work correctly.



## **Answering the Phone**

The telephone can make many a break in your well-planned schedule. Nevertheless, it is an invaluable tool and saves many hours. (Make sure that it is used to save, not waste, hours!) The telephone will be the means of both receiving and making appointments for the pastor. An accurate record of these appointments must be kept and reminders given as needed. There is only one rule to remember when speaking on the phone—be unfailingly pleasant.

Some girls answer fifty or more telephone calls a day on a great variety of subjects. Just think of what a wonderful opportunity to serve and to witness this represents!

## **Informing the Community**

The secretary also has specific responsibilities to her community. She must see that local papers receive notices of church activities, both regular and special events. Make your publicity more effective by using imagination and “human interest” in your stories.

## **Keeping Records**

There are many records to be kept. Pastoral acts—baptisms, marriages, funerals, accessions, dismissals, etc.—must be recorded accurately and kept up to date. Each act usually requires several entries in various records. The congregation’s mailing list requires constant revision. Take care that names are spelled correctly and that addresses are current.

## **Filing**

There are files for membership lists, prospective members, mailing lists, etc., depending upon the needs in the local situation and the emphasis of the pastor and staff.

The weekly bulletin and church paper will be filed for reference and historic value. Reference material for talks and sermons can be filed for the pastor’s use. All correspondence will be filed, usually alphabetically according to the last name of the correspondent.

## **The Work of the Financial Secretary**

Sometimes the parish secretary is the financial secretary of the congregation. Various methods of record keeping are used. A simplified system can be worked out making possible efficient and time-saving results. Consult with secretaries in other churches for ways and means of improving your methods.



## Helpful Hints

**1. Plan your work.** We have already noted that there will be many interruptions and changes in your plan each day, so your schedule must remain flexible. Nevertheless, formulate a plan of procedure. Have clearly in mind what has to be done.

**2. Write things down.** On Sunday morning as you stand at the door or mingle with the congregation you should have a pad and pencil handy. You will receive many important bits of information. Jot down that change of address, that new phone number, that newcomer's name and address, those who are on the sick list, etc. Cultivate your memory, but don't depend upon memory alone to recall so many details.

**3. Be systematic.** Order and neatness will always save you time and trouble. Many routine tasks can often be done by volunteers, such as members of the Scout troop, Hi-League, confirmation classes, etc. They are often eager to help. Give them the privilege of service. There are bulletins to fold, stapling to do, envelopes to stuff and a variety of other routine tasks to be performed. Insist on orderliness and neatness in the doing of each task. Then the doing of it will be fun and satisfying for all concerned.

When you have a group of high school youth in to help you, the door is open for a number of counseling opportunities to unfold. As they chat naturally and informally about recent happenings you will be in a position to offer much helpful guidance and to plant a few "seeds" which will take root in their minds and hearts. As a "recruiting officer" for your Church, these chats will often give you the opening you seek to challenge young people with the adventure of the Church vocations.

**4. Follow through.** Unfinished tasks will mount sky high if allowed to accumulate. Each day has sufficient duties to fill its hours without yesterday's tasks being added to the schedule. Each new task needs the zest that the satisfactory completion of the last job will give it. It's often a good idea to tackle the most difficult or disagreeable job first to clear the way for happier tasks.

**5. File things away when you are finished with them.** Don't let old work clutter up your desk and get in the way of your current assignment.

**6. Look for shorter ways of doing things.** There is a constant challenge to find new and better ways of carrying out ordinary procedures. Any time saved can be put to many good uses. There are always "open doors" for service—things that have not as yet been done because of lack of time.

God and you working together in the church office! There's a creative partnership! Where else can you match it?

Although written in a lighter vein the following "Beatitudes for Church Office Secretaries" contain much thoughtful and timely counsel. It will be worth your while to read them carefully.

### BEATITUDES FOR CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARIES

1. Blessed is the secretary who when she joineth an office team playeth fair with her colleagues and carrieth her share of the load.

2. Blessed is the secretary who seeketh daily to improve her efficiency.

3. Blessed is the secretary who buildeth up for herself a reputation for dependability, for she setteth the mind of her boss at rest.

4. Blessed is the secretary who keepeth her desk and cupboards neat and who, like a good housewife, taketh pride in their sparkle.

5. Blessed is the secretary who refraineth from long conversations over the telephone which disturbeth her colleagues when they are at creative work. For if she mendeth not her ways she becometh in time like the housewife who standeth by the hour at the telephone and gossipeth by the day over the back fence while her children go dirty and her husband goeth hungry.

6. Blessed is the secretary who starteth right in with her work at the appointed time in the morning without dawdling, for she gaineth golden moments ere the static of the day cometh upon her.

7. Blessed is the secretary who hath a pleasant countenance, for she bringeth heaven's sunshine into an office.

8. Blessed is the secretary who hath initiative and who shrinketh not from assignments that require creative thinking.

9. Blessed is the secretary who sticketh to her post during the appointed working hours, so that when her boss wanteth her he needeth not phone the Bureau of Missing Persons.

10. Blessed is the secretary who when she hath letters to write putteth the difficult letters on the top, not the bottom, of the pile.

11. Blessed is the secretary who, save in emergency situations and with the consent of her boss, cleaneth the work off her desk each day; for the morrow bringeth troubles enough without the hangovers of yesterday.

12. Blessed is the secretary who looketh up to the Lord for strength and guidance and then looketh up in the dictionary the words of whose vowel and consonant constituency she is uncertain.

13. Blessed is the secretary who acquireth a reputation for dependability, for if she doth not she getteth blamed even for mistakes she maketh not.

14. Blessed is the secretary who maketh written notations of her boss' instructions; otherwise she cometh upon something a few hours (or days) later and cometh meekly and with downcast countenance to ask: "What's this?" This causeth his blood pressure to rise.

15. Blessed is the secretary who is dependable in details, remembering that our Lord said, "He who is faithful in a little I will set over much," and again, "moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful" and, again, the apostle saith, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

16. Blessed is the secretary who prayeth fervently for her work and then saileth into it with dispatch, lest otherwise she giveth a witness that she is one who "prayeth cream and liveth skim milk".

17. Blessed is the secretary who when she joineth a strong church staff team striveth to play All-American ball, realizing that in an All-American team there must be split-second timing, and her word on an appointment should carry a lot of weight and not a lot of wait.

18. Blessed is the secretary who readeth over carefully what she hath typed or written before she turneth it over to her boss . . . otherwise she is in effect saying that her time is more valuable than that of her chief (who must first take time out to be an English Composition teacher before he can proceed with his work.)

19. Blessed is the secretary who thinketh of ways to minimize . . . not multiply . . . the load of details which cumber the desk of her boss.

20. Blessed is the secretary who taketh pride in the reputation built up by her predecessors for efficiency, speedy and dependable service and who striveth to maintain that reputation, realizing that reputations are built slowly and can be damaged swiftly.

21. Blessed is that secretary who when given a double portion of loveliness, charm and the gift of friendliness by the Lord, taketh these gifts humbly from Him and useth them ever for the glory of Christ and never, never to "get by" with things which in others less gifted and less favorably endowed would be reprimanded as being selfish, thoughtless or inconsiderate.

22. Blessed is the secretary who accepteth in her life with joy "the discipline of detail", realizing, as our Lord saith, that we are first salt and then light. First we must permeate in obscurity as salt, before we can shine in prominence as light.

23. Blessed is the secretary who, rather than treading water futilely in an endless sea of detail, mows through the routine tasks in a few hours at the beginning of the day and then hath the other hours free for those plus contributions of new ideas and creative assignments which are the distinguishing marks of a great church office.

24. Blessed is the secretary who getteth her appointments

straight and who doublechecketh to see that she hath them straight, then writeth them down, then keepeth them. For if she doeth this not, she keepeth all those around her under constant strain and in an uproar. For if she learneth not to keep appointments then she is the forerunner of that housewife whose meals are never on time, who forgetteth to tell her husband of important phone calls and thus keepeth him in constant hot water, and whose children never getteth to school or Sunday school on time and who cometh the wrong Saturday to children's program rehearsal.

25. Blessed is the secretary who hath the wisdom to be gracious and friendly to strangers and visitors and at the same time hath such a keen sense of the dignity and importance of her own work and of the Lord's exhortation to "redeem the time" that she walketh the middle of the road between brusqueness and aloofness on the one hand and interminable time-wasting, meaningless chatter on the other. Such a secretary departeth from her desk at the appointed closing time with the calm assurance in her heart that she hath not been squandering the Lord's time which hath been given her nor the Lord's money which hath gone into her salary.

26. Blessed is the secretary who can demonstrate the real maturity required to "stick to business" in assignments where collaboration with a fellow worker is required, lest the total output at the end of a day be less than if one or the other had worked on it alone.

27. Blessed is the secretary who realizeth that a scavenger hunt is one thing and a treasure hunt is another thing, but that when a thing is to be filed it is to be filed in the place where it belongeth so that it can be found instantly.

28. Blessed is the secretary that knoweth what a sentence is, what a comma is . . . or who, if she knoweth not, getteth ahold of a good old-fashioned grammar book and seeketh diligently until she findeth.

29. Blessed is the secretary who when she senseth that her boss is writing an article or preparing a sermon walketh about on tiptoe and speaketh in hushed tones such as becometh those who are in the presence of such genius at work.

30. Blessed is the secretary who hath an alarm clock that ringeth loudly and ears that heareth the same, so that she getteth up and goeth to work on time.

31. BLESSED IS THE BOSS WHO HATH A SECRETARY WHO LIVETH ACCORDING TO THESE BEATITUDES, FOR WHAT HE HATH IS REALLY MORE THAN A SECRETARY; HE IS, IN THE WORDS OF THE SCRIPTURES, "ENTERTAINING AN ANGEL UNAWARES".

**"Fear not: for I am with Thee: I will bring Thy seed from the East and gather Thee from the West:**

**"I will say to the North, Give up; and to the South, keep not back: bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I HAVE CREATED HIM FOR MY GLORY, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."**

**Isaiah 43:5-7**





## CHAPTER VIII

### THE YOUTH DIRECTOR

“And he said to Him, ‘Teacher, all these things I have observed from my youth.’ And Jesus looking upon him loved him.” (Mark 10:20-21)

It is both a thrilling and an awesome privilege to serve as a youth director in a congregation; thrilling because of the joy experienced in seeing young people “come through” in their faith in Christ and love for Him; awesome because the conscientious youth leader senses his great responsibility to lead by deed as well as by word. He cannot be a Christian youth leader unless he himself is led by Christ.

There have been many youth movements in world history. We think of the crusades, of Hitler’s youth movement, of the strong emphasis on youth enlistment and training on the part of the communists, and many others. Christianity is not unique in recognizing the importance of winning and using young people for a cause. Sometimes the pagan youth movements put the Church to shame at this point. The words of our Lord are again strikingly applicable: “The sons of this world are wiser in their own generation than the sons of light.” (Luke 16:8)

**Christian** youth work, however, is unique. It is unique in its **origin**—launched as it was at that tremendous moment in history when John the Baptist pointed his followers to Christ and said: “Behold the Lamb of God!” It is unique in its **goal for the individual**—

every youth in the conscious, joyous fellowship of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and busy serving Him. It is unique in its **task**—to keep youth faithful to Christ; to help them grow in His grace and knowledge and to use them in His service; to reclaim those who have wandered from their baptismal covenant; and to win those who have never belonged to Him.

Christian youth work is also unique in its **goal for the group**. The Luther League is the youth of the Church banded together for fellowship and mobilized for service. "Into the Word"—that is the center of good League work; therefore the stress on daily Bible reading through the *Uniting Word* and on Bible-centered topics in *Youth Programs* and other program booklets; then, "Out to the World!" with witnessing and missionary projects—that is its circumference.

Vital Christian youth work is like a hand—the thumb: we worship; the index finger: we study; the center finger: we work; the fourth finger: we play; the little finger: we plan; the whole hand: we belong to a big team.

The Christian youth director rejects vehemently the philosophy that the League is just a "teen age play organization" and that "the youth get preaching at the worship service and Bible study in the Church School, so be careful lest they get too much religion." That kind of vicious nonsense cuts the heart out of the Christian youth crusade and dooms a youth movement to futility and frustration.

The one distinctive thing which we have to offer youth is Jesus Christ. Those who are in positions of youth leadership in the congregation have too big a job to do and too little time in which to do it to be majoring in minors.

Take a look at the purpose of the Luther League as outlined under Article II in its constitution. (See page 43 in the *Luther League Handbook*.) It is to **keep** youth for Christ and His Church, to **train** youth for Christian living and for adult church membership, to **enlighten** youth by the Word of God and through the total teaching ministry of the Church, to **use** the energies of youth in Christian service, to **enfold** youth in a program of fellowship, and to **unite** youth with fellow Christian youth around the world under the banner of the cross.

In short, the essence of Christian youth work is to point young people to the matchless Christ. In the measure in which this is your aim, your work as a youth director will be vital and fruitful.

### **Qualifications of the Youth Director**

With the challenging goal of Christian youth work before you, you will be keenly aware of your **personal** needs as a youth director.

First of all, the youth leader must be genuinely and thoroughly Christian. We have already seen that Christian youth work is shar-

ing Jesus Christ. We cannot share what we do not have. Your own personal faith in Christ, and your love for Him, is the foundation of your life and your work. Trying to build a vital Christian youth program in a congregation without this foundation, or on some other foundation, is like trying to build a house on a swamp. It might look fine and weather the storms for a while but inevitably it will disintegrate and collapse.

In order to share Christ with others you will need to draw constantly upon His grace and guidance for your own life. Youth are quick to recognize a counterfeit leader. They can detect a "phony" almost at a glance. They look to their leaders to be consistent Christians who live out in their daily lives the high aspirations they expound with their lips.

We cannot minimize the personal element in youth leadership. Young people are by nature impressionable, but they are more deeply impressed by personalities than by principles. This poses the youth director's greatest temptation as well as his greatest opportunity. "Hero worship" on the part of young people is not necessarily bad; it all depends on who the hero is and how worthy he is of the admiration of the young people. A youth director often becomes such a hero in the eyes of youth. If God places you in such a position of influence, you will be sensitive to a holy trust. You will pray daily for grace to be the kind of example that your young people may safely emulate, but even beyond that you will strive to develop the loyalty of the group so that it extends beyond yourself—to the Christ who lives in you and Who serves through you.

### Loving the Unlovable

You must also have a deep interest in and concern for young people as **individuals**. It was said of our Lord that when He looked upon the Rich Young Ruler He loved him. Your love for youth as individuals must not be confined to the attractive, co-operative, responsive and dedicated young people; it must be big enough to embrace also the shy, unsociable, loud, overbearing and lazy ones. You cannot "create" that kind of a love for others. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit which comes only to those who have spent much time at Calvary.

You must also have the kind of personality which makes it easy for young people to like you. There is a cheap and easy way in which the youth director can ingratiate himself with his young people; that is by compromising his own purposes and principles in order to be considered a "right guy." Some young people will like the youth director who will never cross them—who will always "go along"—but few will respect him. The response and rapport for which you will

rightly seek is the kind of affection which will lead the youth to like you even when you have to say "no" to some of their wishes and ideas.

This will mean that, in addition to your love for young people, it is also necessary for you to understand them. You will have to know something of their psychology, their mercurial restlessness, their desire for social approval, their problems, their dreams. You must have "empathy"—the ability to "see with their eyes." This need further points up the importance of thinking of young people as individuals, rather than simply as a part of a group, for no two youth have exactly the same problems or the same possibilities.

### **Keep Growing**

There are a number of ways in which you can really "get next" to your young people. First, spend a lot of time with your Bible. You will be amazed constantly by its rich insights into the nature of the human heart. As you grow in your own knowledge of the Scriptures and of its message, you will grow also in your ability to counsel young people about their problems and needs. Secondly, spend much time in prayer. Have a prayer list and bring the youth, one by one, before the throne of grace. As you intercede for them, and mention their specific problems and needs, add this personal petition: "And, O Lord, insofar as it is possible, answer this prayer through me." Thirdly, keep up with your reading. Consult the list of recommended books on youth work which you will find in the Appendix at the back of this book. Make it a practice to read at least one good book every two weeks. It will pay rich dividends in your own life and in the greater effectiveness of your work.

The youth director must be a person of initiative and creative ability and know when to exercise these talents and when, in the interest of the growth of the young people, to withhold them. He must be a person of sustained enthusiasm, not easily discouraged when things go wrong. There are enough disappointments in church youth work to drive us back to the foot of the Cross (where we belong!); enough encouragements to keep us going with a bounce and a song. He must be a good listener—listening not only to their "public" conversation but also to the substratum speech in which they express their deepest needs. He must be a person of sunny spirit, of healthy emotional life, of tact, of maturity of judgment, and of earnest humility. (You can get a heap of youth work done in a day if you don't care who gets the credit for it!)

These are exacting requirements. They have to be, because the stakes are so high! No sincere young man will feel qualified for a youth directorship if he examines himself in the light of these stand-



ards. (It would be tragic if his opinion of himself was so high that he felt convinced that he was admirably qualified!) It is the glory of our Christian life, however, that while we sense our own inadequacies, we trust also God's power to help us to grow in our discipleship and in the virtues of an unselfish, out-going life. Make that **your** personal goal! You haven't arrived yet, but by His grace, you can be on the way! Brooks' plea, "Do not pray for tasks equal to your power, but for power equal to your tasks," points up not only your need but the way in which it can be fulfilled.

### **Educational Requirements**

If you are going into this work, it would be very valuable for you to attend a Church college. Our colleges have a number of courses which will help you to prepare for the varied and challenging tasks which will be yours as a youth director.

You will want to study Bible, Christian Doctrine and Church History Courses (which are basic and fundamental), Psychology, particularly the Psychology of Adolescence, Education, Sociology (and Social Work) and Public Speaking. A course in Group Recreation would be useful. Time spent on the campus in musical and journalistic endeavors would be of value in equipping you to lead some group singing and do some writing for your church paper. Typing, while not a "must", would be most helpful in your work.

It is encouraging to note that a number of our Lutheran schools are now offering special courses in youth work. Gustavus Adolphus, for example, has a two-credit course on "Youth Work in the Church." The Lutheran Bible Institute offers courses in both Luther League work and group dynamics. It is very important to know how to use wisely the latest findings of group dynamics.

By all means, get as much practical experience as possible. Participate in the religious activities on the campus. Get into Luther League delegation work. Serve as a counselor at a summer Bible Camp and/or Leadership School. Be alert for opportunities to work with the youth in the congregation adjacent to the college campus. All of these experiences will afford valuable training for the work to which God is calling you.

### **Learn by Doing**

The young man or woman who serves a congregation as a youth director will find innumerable opportunities to "grow on the job." That is, every new day in the work will offer open doors to further preparation. You will learn as you work with the young people. You will learn through your associations with the pastor, whose personal counsel will be an invaluable source of information and direction. You



will learn from your contacts with other youth directors and counselors, as you compare notes with them on the League activities in the congregations in your area. You will learn as you continue your personal daily Bible study and reading program.

Mention has already been made of the books which the youth director will find to be of practical value in his work. (See the list of recommended books in the Appendix.) The most helpful of all such tools is the *Luther League Handbook*. The youth director should be thoroughly familiar with it. He will find the answer to the question, "What is good League work?" between its covers. He will encounter few problems in his youth work which are not discussed in this book. The solutions the book offers are those which have been "kitchen tested" in actual League situations. The youth director should not only know the *Handbook*; he should know how to lead the Luther League counselors and officers into its storehouse of practical helps for building better Leagues. A few evenings spent with the League counselors and officers in a discussion of the suggestions contained in the *Luther League Handbook* would be time very wisely invested.

### Camps, Conferences, Schools

There are many other ways in which the youth director can equip himself for a more effective service while "on the job." A week with his young people at a Bible Camp will not only give him new insights into the Word; it will help him to understand better his own young people as he lives with them twenty-four hours a day for a solid week. His attendance, with a delegation from his League, at the biennial Youth Conference will also be a source of valuable information and inspiration. The many discussion periods at the convention on practical League problems will afford the youth director a rich opportunity both to learn and to share.

By all means, make it a special point to get to the Leadership School held in your area. No one learns more at these Schools than do the pastors, interns, youth directors and counselors who attend with their young people. The entire setting—the classes and discussions, study periods, planning hours, Bible hours, sharing by the "model Leagues"—lends itself most favorably to a stimulating "learning by doing" process. The actual demonstrations in the latest methods of group dynamics are valuable enough in themselves to justify the attendance of the youth director. Many a youth leader has said that more practical counsel on how to build a vital League program was offered in one week at Leadership School than had been previously received in that person's lifetime.

In addition to these opportunities, the youth director will want to attend the biennial Church Staff Workers' Institutes. Congregations

are being encouraged to send their staff workers to these institutes with their expenses paid. The inspiration and fellowship as well as the helpful sharing of ideas which come out of these meetings will enable the youth director to return to his job with renewed insight, vigor and enthusiasm.

### How to Get Started

Let us assume, for a moment, that you have just arrived on the scene of your first assignment as a youth director in a congregation. Where should you begin?

First of all, of course, you will want to spend much time with the pastor. He will acquaint you with the past history of the congregation's youth program by way of backgrounding you for your present opportunity. He will also unfold his personal goals and aspirations as far as youth work is concerned. You will seek and cherish a close-working relationship with the pastor in all the phases of your task. He is the "counselor-in-chief" of the youth of the church in which you serve. Your job is to give him as much assistance as possible in developing a strong youth program.

It would be wise to make a survey of the over-all youth picture in the parish. You will find a suggested questionnaire for such a survey on pages 206-207 in the *Luther League Handbook*. Your findings, on the basis of this questionnaire, will help you to determine whether there are any "pocket" areas of unreached youth in the congregation, how active the young people are in youth movements sponsored by non-church groups, how faithful they are in their stewardship and in attendance at worship services, holy communion, and young peoples' Bible classes and many other related questions.

Having secured as much background information as possible, you would be wise to sit down with the pastor and League counselors and map out the specific goals you have in mind for the congregation's youth program in terms of both immediate and long-range objectives. In connection with each goal, it is well to spell out the definite steps which must be taken in order to realize it. It is a good idea, too, to review these objectives periodically to see if progress is being made in the direction of their fulfillment.

### Luther League Counselors

Next, you will want to mobilize **adult support** for the congregation's youth program. The services of a local youth board, (described on page 96), can be an important step in this direction. You will also welcome the opportunity to interpret your work, define your needs and set forth your goals at meetings of the Board of Administration and various auxiliary groups of the congregation from time to time. By all means, make sure that each of your youth groups has an ade-

quate corps of interested adults serving as counselors. The fact that you are giving all your time to the supervision of the congregation's youth program in no sense should be interpreted to mean that volunteer counselors are not needed. It would be both unwise and unfair to deprive qualified adults of the privilege of rendering counseling service to the youth groups; in addition, the young people need and will heartily welcome the presence and active participation of such friends of youth.

In fact, your efforts in securing, training and using such a band of counselors will represent one of the most important services which you can render the congregation in your capacity as youth director. The effectiveness of your work will be multiplied many times over through your ministry in "counseling the counselors."

### **Interesting the Parents**

It is important to the success of the youth program that there be adequate home co-operation. When you win the support of the parents to your cause, you have won an important victory. Occasional "parent's nights" at League meetings can be an effective means of informing the parents of your program and needs and rallying their support.

Youth Sunday each year offers a golden opportunity to the youth director to interpret his program to the congregation. As he works with the young people in preparing for the special services of that day, he accomplishes a double purpose—the Leaguers are given an opportunity to bear witness of their faith, and the attention of the entire congregation is focused on the youth cause.

### **A Local Youth Board**

Many congregations have a local youth board which meets quarterly for the purpose of giving guidance and direction to the total youth program of the parish. The youth director is an advisory member of this board and plays an important part in its proceedings, both in the matter of reporting the problems, needs and progress of the youth groups to the board, and in implementing the recommendations and suggestions of the board in terms of the actual youth program. Other members of the board usually include the pastor, a deacon, a trustee, the presidents of the Luther Leagues, the League counselors, the young people's Bible class teachers (who are often the counselors of the Leagues), the Scout leaders, the presidents of the Teen-age and Business Women's divisions of the W. M. S. and the director of the youth choir. In some cases two representatives from the congregation, chosen with great care, also serve on this board.

Such an organization, while meeting only four times a year, can

serve an important function in the congregation by bringing these key leaders together for a fellowship of prayer and study. Out of such meetings much effective guidance can be offered the youth groups, particularly in such areas as keeping the church alerted to its youth potential, correlating all the young people's activities, seeing that all age levels (including the young adults) are provided for, preventing over-lapping of activities, co-ordinating plans for a meaningful observance of Youth Sunday, assuring a balanced summer program with regular League meetings together with a good representation of youth at Bible Camp, Leadership School and the biennial Youth Conference, and working for adequate facilities and staff (including a good corps of counselors) for the youth program.

Such a board should arise from a definite sense of need, coming into being not to be just "another organization" but for the purpose of building the strongest possible Christian youth program for the young people of the congregation and of the community served by the church.

Write to the Youth Office for a suggested constitution and further information.

### **How to Secure Your Counselors**

If you do not have a corps of counselors to give guidance to the activities of the Leagues in your congregation, you will want to take the steps necessary to secure such help at the earliest opportunity. Your youth groups should have a definite voice in the selection of their leaders. The Leaguers will often have in mind a married couple, or several couples, or one or two single young adults, whom they know they would enjoy having as their counselors. If their selections meet with the approval of the pastor, who is always the "counselor-in-chief," a formal letter of call should be prepared by the Youth Board or Board of Deacons. A personal call by the pastor, accompanied by two Leaguers, on the persons thus selected would be an effective way of "making the sale."

### **Use Your Counselors**

It must be emphasized that the youth director, in his role of "leader of the leaders," is to work with and through the Luther League counselors in establishing and implementing the principles outlined on the following pages. Even a quick reading of this material should be enough to convince any congregation that the pastor and youth director cannot possibly do this job alone, and that it will take their best efforts plus the volunteer services of an alert, trained and dedicated corps of counselors to do justice to the almost limitless opportunities there are for building a vital Christian youth program.



## Working with the Leagues

It is not the purpose of this chapter to duplicate the material in the *Luther League Handbook*. Present and potential youth directors are urged to familiarize themselves thoroughly with the contents of this key tool. Reference should be made, however, to some specific aspects of League activity which call for the thoughtful guidance of the youth director and which represent distinctive areas of leadership in which his influence can be exerted positively in behalf of youth.

1. See that there are regular meetings of the League's Executive Committee. The elected officers of the League are to be trained in leadership and a sense of responsibility.

2. Do not assume that the League officers understand the specific nature of their duties. Challenge each officer with the special responsibility and opportunity connected with his job. (The Youth Office has a series of folders on the duties of each League officer.)

3. Arrange to get all the Leaguers into the center of the stream of League activity by setting up one of the "committee" or "team" plans described in the *Handbook*, pages 38-42. The "Three-Team Plan" commends itself to youth groups of virtually any size and has been successful in overcoming "spectatoritis" by making all Leaguers active participants in the League program.

4. Have the Leaguers draw up a yearly calendar, setting forth in outline form, at least, the broad strokes of their over-all program of activities. Some Leagues have scheduled a weekend "retreat" just before the beginning of the fall season in order to have time to think through and pray through their program for the coming year.

5. Arrange to have the League meet as often as possible; at least once a week. Remember, these young people are going to be active in something. If the League does not fill their needs for fellowship and activity, some other type of organization will. The Scouting program would not get very far if Scout meetings were held only every-other week. The key to a successful youth organization lies in an active, aggressive, varied and vital program.

6. The best programs for youth are those which hit hard at the deep-seated needs and problems of young people. *Youth Programs* is prepared and distributed each quarter to fill this specific need. Experience has proven that the Leaguers love to enter into a vital discussion on themes which are closely related to their daily walk. As the youth director guides them in the preparation and presentation of these topics, he is in a very real and important sense helping them to apply the solutions of God's Word to their daily needs.

7. Let the League be a workshop in which a strong and dynamic



churchmanship is fostered. The meaning of reverence, the importance of regularity in attendance at divine worship, the blessings of faithfulness in communing at the Lord's Table, the lessons the Bible teaches on the subject of stewardship, the work of the Christian Church in all of its phases at home and overseas, the needs of the local congregation in terms of its current, benevolence and building fund budgets—all represent topics which youth will eagerly discuss if they are given the opportunity. One youth director recently reported that his Leaguers asked more intelligent questions of the Trustees when the congregational budget was being explained than any other members of the congregation.

8. Strengthen the devotional life of the League. The moments the young people spend around the Word of God and in prayer should be the most carefully prepared part of the entire League program. Variations of the devotional pattern, coupled with the use of carefully selected devotional material, can serve to make this aspect of the meeting the vital and inspiring experience that it should be. Special programs on the Bible, the Church Year, Symbolism, Prayer, the Family Altar, the P. T. L., and related themes, together with the showing of appropriate filmstrips on these subjects, have definite value in deepening and strengthening this most important aspect of Luther League life. In this connection, the youth director should constantly stress the need for daily devotions and be prepared to guide the youth in their use of *The Uniting Word*. It is a good idea, too, to check with the young people from time to time to see how they are "making out" in their personal devotional life. Much of this counsel can be offered to the assembled group, but the youth leader should be especially alert in seeking out opportunities to chat personally with the Leaguers regarding their personal worship and devotional life.

9. Build a strong Luther League Bible Class. Very often, the youth director serves as the teacher of such a class. Often, too, one of the League counselors teaches the class. There is a definite value in relating the Bible Class to the League as closely as possible and when the person giving direction to the League program also meets with the young people in their Bible studies, this relationship is greatly strengthened.

10. Give the League a chance to tackle some vital service projects each year. These projects should be carefully chosen and motivated and should include services which can be rendered within the congregation, within the community, and within the framework of the Church at large. The League does not exist for the purpose of raising funds for special causes, however worthy they might be. There are times, however, when a specific project will call for a special effort on the part of the League in terms of gathering funds. When this is the

case, make sure that the method for raising funds is in keeping with the best principles of Christian stewardship. By all means, give the League the opportunity to participate in at least one meaningful missionary project each year. A continuous program of missionary education in the League (the Youth Office, through the courtesy of the W. M. S., distributes a special missionary program to each League each quarter) can accomplish wonders in building good churchmanship and good stewardship within the League organization.

11. Mobilize the League for visitation. It has often been pointed out that there is no more effective way in which to win a young person to Christ than by the witness of a fellow youth. Again, proper motivation and preparation is important. Teaching the Leaguers how to carry out their visitation by means of "role-playing" (illustrating both the right and the wrong way to make a call) will be helpful in enabling the youth to overcome their initial feeling that they "just can't do it." They can do it, but they have to be shown **why** and **how**!

12. Avoid the perils of "localitis" in your League by encouraging "exchange programs" with neighboring Leagues and by getting a delegation of young people along to District, Conference and A. L. L. League activities. As a youth director you have much to gain and much to share through your personal participation in such activities as your District Bible Camp, your Conference Leadership School, and the biennial Youth Conferences of the Augustana Luther League.

13. Plan an over-all program of summer activities. Don't make the mistake of "writing off" the summer months, feeling that it is impossible to keep a good youth program going between May and September. Take advantage of the fact that young people are hungrier for fellowship during vacation time than they are when school is in session, that they have more time for church and League activities, and that interest in the summer Bible Camps, Leadership Schools and Youth Conferences sparks a greater enthusiasm for all phases of Christian youth activity. (If you would make a list of all the extra-curricular activities in which your young people are engaged during the school year, and then realize that when school is out all of these activities are automatically suspended for three months, you would realize the tremendous vacuum which will be created in the lives of the youth. Why not see to it that the League fills that empty space?)

14. If possible, build a **community** youth program. Rally the entire congregation around the cause of using the facilities and resources of the church (and press for additional facilities as needed!) in order to reach out to the non-churched young people in the area served by the congregation. That area represents a field of responsibility for your church. Securing a good band of volunteers to assist you carry out a daily (after school and evening) program of crafts, hobbies, in-

terest groups and recreational activities will result in countless open doors to counsel the young people thus reached at the level of their deeper needs.

15. Strive earnestly to avoid the two extremes of failing to provide adequate guidance for the youth on the one hand and assuming so much leadership that you smother their initiative on the other. There is no simple, clear-cut rule to follow in this connection because of the differences in the capacities of the individual Leaguers. Sometimes a youth worker will feel that it is better to assume the lion's share of the responsibility in setting up a given program (in order to assure its success) than to leave the reins in the hands of the young people themselves and run the risk of a poorly planned and executed meeting. The issue cannot be resolved by taking an "either-or" position, however. Somewhere in between the two extremes of offering too much and too little guidance the youth director will find his rightful place; the exact position can be determined only on the basis of his knowledge of and experience with the young people involved. As a general rule he will find that while considerable direction will be required at the first, as the young people grow in their vision, leadership and sense of responsibility they will be able to carry out an increasing measure of the program "on their own." The youth director will have to be especially patient with those who are not quite up to the average in their confidence and capabilities.

16. Make it the purpose of your life to **really do youth work**. There will be so many open doors for such a wide variety of services in the church that even a youth worker has to be on the alert constantly lest his real work is crowded out, or pushed to the periphery of his daily schedule.

### **Working with Youth As Individuals**

There are few relationships in life in which the "personal touch" is as important as in the relationship of the youth director to his young people. The concern of the Church is to help youth as individuals to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ. It is often through the influence of warm, personal, human relationships that the personal relationship of the Leaguer to Christ is fostered and strengthened. The youth director has the privilege of playing a vital role in this ministry.

The following suggestions are offered simply as a guide to the limitless opportunities for personal counseling which will be yours as a youth director in a congregation:

1. Keep a card file on each young person with whom you come into contact, noting such facts as talents, interests, problems, response

to the youth program and other information which you learn about the individual "along the way." Such a file can also serve as your "prayer list." Make it a regular practice to remember each young person by name as you bring him to God in prayer.

2. Be psychologically available to the youth, so that they know that you **want** them to come to you with their problems and that you are not only willing but actually eager to take time to counsel with them. By making it a point to be at the church when school is out each day, you will be indicating to the young people that you are "available" for personal chats. Some of your richest insights into their lives will come from such informal conversations. Try to have a good chat with each boy and girl once a year for the first five years after confirmation.

3. It is not the primary task of the counselor to make decisions for others, but to help them to make their own decisions and abide by them. Your role will be that of a friend who, on the one hand, does not project himself into the lives of others but who, on the other, stands ready to share his counsel when such help is needed. To many a young person, particularly if he comes from a broken or otherwise unhappy home, you will be like a father. You will cherish the privilege and sense the deep responsibility of such a relationship. You will also be more keenly aware than ever of your constant need for God's guidance and grace.

4. Often you will find that the most important thing that you can do for a young man or a young woman is to be a good listener. Many youth need an opportunity to pour out their hearts to someone in whom they have confidence.

5. Make sure that you know and can interpret to young people the answers to their basic questions, such as:

- A. How can I be sure that I am a Christian?
- B. How can I share my faith with others?
- C. How can I relieve the tensions which exist in my home?
- D. Why should I be chaste?
- E. How can I know the will of God for my life?

6. Deepen your knowledge of the Bible. It is your basic tool in the many counseling opportunities which will come your way. Dr. William E. Hulme of Wartburg College, Dubuque, Iowa, author of the book, *Face Your Life with Confidence*, and a youth counselor with broad experience, has found the following Scripture passages to be especially helpful in assisting young people to find the solutions to their problems in the Word of God:



A. For faith and confidence: Habakkuk 3:17-18, Psalm 31:24, Matthew 5:6, John 15:7, II Corinthians 5:7, II Corinthians 9:8, Philip-  
pians 4:13, Colossians 3:23 and Hebrews 11:1.

B. For comfort and security: Isaiah 26:3, Isaiah 41:13, John 14:1, Romans 8:1 and I Corinthians 10:13.

C. For hope in despair: Psalm 42:5, Jeremiah 29:13, Romans 8:28, Galatians 6:9, Hebrews 12:11-12 and I Peter 5:7.

D. For overcoming anxiety and resentment: Philippians 4:6-7, II Timothy 1:7, Hebrews 13:6 and I John 4:18-19.

E. For overcoming guilt: Isaiah 43:25, Romans 5:1 and I John 1:9.

F. For guidance: Isaiah 30:21 and Proverbs 3:5-6.

G. For self-discipline: Psalm 37:8, Psalm 141:3, Proverbs 16:32, Proverbs 19:11, II Corinthians 10:5, Ephesians 4:28, Philippians 4:8-9 and James 1:19-20.

H. The Christ center: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 16:25, Romans 6:11, Galatians 2:20, Galatians 5:24 (pride) and I Corinthians 13:4-5.

In addition, the following passages will be helpful in bringing youth to the joy of assurance of salvation: I John 5:12, 13, I John 1:9, Revelation 3:20, John 1:12 and II Timothy 1:12.

7. Recognize the individual gifts and differences of your youth. Some will demonstrate outstanding talent and must be encouraged to use it humbly and to God's glory. However, it is important that you be concerned equally about the less gifted young people in the congregation. The time and encouragement you give to them will bring rich dividends.

8. Be especially alert to guide youth in such important matters as their choice of college and vocation. Arrange for contacts with the Church college in the area in which your congregation is located by having delegations from the college visit the congregation and, if possible, by bringing a carload of youth from your church down to the campus for a visit. Make it a point to get to know the vocational counselor in the high schools attended by your young people. He will appreciate your interest and will be in a position to offer information on the vocational inclinations of many of the youth about whom you are concerned. Be sure to challenge your finest young people with the need for workers in the Church vocations by arranging for special programs, discussions and filmstrip showings at League meetings and by the personal counseling you will do along the way.

9. Keep a good file of fresh, up-to-date material on such subjects as vocations, boy-girl relations, the Bible and Science, and similar themes so that you have immediate access to such information when it is needed. (And it will be needed!)



10. Don't brood over your failures. There will be times when you simply can't attain your goals with the League as a group or with certain young people as individuals. If you prayed earnestly about the matter and then went on to do your level best to help the group or the person in a particular situation without seeing the results you expected, it doesn't mean that you have failed. It may mean that you will have to be patient and to let the Holy Spirit work out the problem in His own way and in His own time. The Lord will grant the conscientious youth director enough "victories" to encourage him to carry on valiantly in his purposeful work in behalf of young people, and just enough "defeats" to keep him humble and aware of his utter dependency upon God Who alone can establish the work of his hands.

### Other Organizations

The young man who serves as Youth Director will be a real booster for the Boy Scout troop sponsored by the men's organization; the young lady Youth Director will find fellowship in the Business Women's Missionary Society. If the congregation has a Teen Age Missionary Society she will back it; otherwise, she will see to it that both the young fellows and girls get missionary education through the Luther League.

Christ and youth—there's a winning team! What greater privilege is there in all of life than to be an instrument in bringing and keeping them together!

### Make of My Heart an Upper Room

*Make of my heart an upper room, I pray,  
Swept clean of pride, let self be but a door  
Through which young lives may come to Thee this day,  
To know Thee as they have not known before.  
Speak through my voice that they may hear Thine own.  
Shine through my life in beauty and in truth  
That they may see the Comrade Christ alone  
And in the glad impulsiveness of youth  
Rise up as did those fisher lads of Thine  
Who left their boats and nets to follow Thee,  
So may they walk beside Thee, these of mine  
Whom out of all the world "Thou gavest me."*

—MOLLY ANDERSON HALEY

## Bearers of the Light

You are the youth of the world;  
You are the bearers of the Light.  
Into your hands each generation thrusts  
the seemingly dead ashes of its failures,  
Hoping that the eternal miracle of your  
courage may breathe them into life.  
While wisdom treads cautiously the well-  
beaten roads  
Or sits in the twilight jealously guarding  
the watchfires of the past,  
You are out on the high trails,  
Watching the sun rise from the top of  
some new Parnassus,  
Probing your searchlights into dim,  
uncharted depths,  
Planting your beacons high among the stars.  
Age may produce earth's statesmen and its seers;  
Youth gives the world its prophets.  
Isaiah, John, Francis, Luther—they were all young men  
When the Dream smote them, made of them living flames  
To purge and quicken all humanity.

One thing—and one alone—  
can avail in this crisis or in any other  
To build the Beloved Community:  
The spirit of a certain Man who lived long ago  
Who was lonely and misunderstood,  
Who was dubbed a heretic and a dreamer,  
Who relentlessly set his face toward a way which led to death  
Because He loved His brother men.  
In those three short years of His living and dying  
He lived for us; He died for us and showed us how  
to save the world.  
This is the challenge that comes to Christian youth today:  
To love men as He loved them;  
All men, black or white, clean or dirty, white collared  
or begrimed with soot and sweat,  
American or Russian or English or Chinese;  
Love men until our very beings are a part of them,  
Until our own flesh writhes beneath their burdens and injustices,  
Until we are molded and twisted like white metal  
upon an anvil,  
Until we ourselves, consumed by a living fire,  
Become the torches that shall bring light to this darkened world.

Adapted from  
—DOROTHY CLARKE WILSON

Said General Evangeline Booth of the Salvation Army:

“The spirit of the hero dwells in every heart. I have known many Christian young people in my time—have instructed many, have talked to a great many—and I have never known that presenting the difficulties involved in an assignment deterred a single one.”



## CHAPTER IX

### THE DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Basic in the Christian education program of the Lutheran Church is the gift of grace received in holy baptism by which the child is brought into fellowship with God. The purpose of Christian education is to assist the child, the youth, and the adult to grow in this grace.

The aim which must guide all the educational work of the Church is this: to help all in the congregation grow in fellowship with God, in an understanding and acceptance of the Christian faith, and in an expression of that faith in Christian living, both personal and social. To accomplish this aim requires the united effort of all in the congregation—pastor, church council, educational director, superintendents, teachers, group advisors, parents, and many others.

It is the task of the Christian education director, working with the pastor, the church council, and its Christian education committee, to co-ordinate the total educational efforts of the congregation. In order to build and maintain high standards and to use every opportunity

to fulfill the educational aim, a continuing leadership training program for all phases of the work is essential.

When we think of the number of Church Schools in comparison with the number of full-time Christian educational directors, we become aware of the vast number of faithful volunteers needed to carry on the educational program of the church. We also recognize the tremendous load carried by our pastors and other church staff workers in the teaching ministry. Every church staff worker is in some way connected with the program of Christian education. It becomes the responsibility of the educational director to maintain a high standard of work and to assist the other church staff workers and volunteer teachers to do their very best in teaching the Way of Salvation and the truths of the Christian life to all who come within the influence of our Church.

## MAJOR DUTIES OF THE DIRECTOR

1. **The recruiting of teachers.** Securing volunteers to teach Christian truths is obviously not done on the same basis as the county or city school board secures its teachers. Teachers for the Christian education program are selected on the basis of consecration to Christ, love and understanding of children, knowledge of teaching methods, availability and willingness to serve. Members of the Board of Education, which should be a part of the Church Council, should always be on the alert for good prospects to add to the teaching staff. The director of Christian education will personally contact all who are being considered for teaching, challenging them as to the importance of such an assignment. In no way minimize the teaching program by giving the impression that it is an easy task requiring little time and that "anyone can do it". It is a service that requires a great deal of all who are willing to give of their time, energy and devotion to it.

2. **The training of teachers.** The ideal is to have a continuous training program for Church School teachers, so that no one need enter into this important work without first having had training. Perhaps the start has not been made, and you must train teachers "on the job" through various means, such as a series of ten weekly sessions or a summer or fall teachers' institute sponsored by the District or in co-operation with several other churches. A small beginning in training teachers is better than no beginning at all. The regular monthly teachers' meetings can also be used for training purposes. The "Triple T" program sponsored by the Church's Board of Parish Education is highly recommended.

3. **Setting up the physical appointments of the Church School.** Sunday Schools are held in a wide variety of settings, all the way from



classes in church pews and crowded basements to new and up-to-date educational units with excellent facilities. Where adequate facilities are non-existent, there is much that the Christian educational director can do to improve the appearance of rooms where classes are held. Organizations of the church are often willing to help in supplying equipment and furnishings if they are made aware of the needs. Audio-visual aids should be provided. See that conditions are as pleasant and convenient for effective teaching as possible.

**4. Selecting and supervising the curriculum.** The right selection of what to teach is of utmost importance. That the pupils may know Christ is the ultimate aim, so it must be a Christ-centered program based on the Bible. The Board of Parish Education with headquarters at 2445 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota, which shares in the preparation of "The Christian Growth Series", will give valuable help in regard to materials for Sunday Schools, Vacation Church Schools and special programs.

**5. Supervising the teachers in classes, helping to improve instruction and worship.** Constructive suggestions for improvement following a visit to a class will be welcomed by an alert teacher. Helping teachers solve difficult disciplinary problems will do much to prevent discouragement on the part of teachers.

**6. Supervising the records.** Records are necessary and valuable but require time. There will be some who are willing to help in secretarial work who do not feel qualified to teach. They will need the supervision and guidance of the director of Christian education.

Be sure your records are not an end in themselves but are used. The basic records will be enrollment cards, attendance cards and cumulative records. Other records will depend upon the system used locally. Use a simple method of records on visitation. There will be financial records, of course. Many Church Schools have experienced marked growth in stewardship, the giving being doubled and tripled in some instances, by using the envelope system of giving in the Sunday School. More and more schools are using the duplex envelope to stimulate giving for missions and benevolences.

Records reveal weaknesses and strengths. Study them and make use of the knowledge gained from them. Follow up absentees, note findings on visitations, visit new enrollees promptly and forward any information pertinent to other departments in the church to the proper people so follow-up can be made. Your records can live and tell a story of growth and progress.

**7. Visiting the children's and teachers' homes.** Problems, plans and helpful suggestions cannot be discussed at length on Sunday morning due to lack of time and the necessity of giving your full attention

to the children who have come for instruction. The real understanding of the needs of your school and an evaluation of the Church School's success in meeting them are best gained through regular visits to the homes of both teachers and pupils.

**8. Developing the Church School parent-teacher relationships.** There should be at least one or two parent-teacher meetings during each year. Parents should be encouraged to counsel with Church School teachers and leaders in regard to the spiritual growth of their children.

**9. Supervising the Cradle Roll.**

**10. Directing the Vacation Church School and "released time" religious instruction where that is offered.**

**11. Preparing an adequate, realistic budget.** Do not be demanding, but always let the needs of the Church School be known to those "in authority." Do not let economy be practiced at the expense of the children's religious growth and development.

**12. Acting as co-ordinator between congregation and Church School.** No department of the church should operate independently of other departments. The aim and purpose of all is the same. It is up to the leadership in each department to establish and promote unity.

## QUALIFICATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

**1. You must first be a student of the Bible, giving time each day to a systematic study of the Word.** This keeps your life consistent with the position you hold, guides and motivates your thoughts, words and actions in your work. Specific Bible training can be obtained through day or evening school, correspondence courses or summer camps.

**2. College courses in Christianity and education are especially helpful.** Courses in religious education and in the administration of the Church School (including Sunday School, weekday school, Vacation Church School, and released time classes for religious instruction) are of great help. Elementary courses in education and psychology will help in the understanding of children of different age levels and thus aid in the choice of materials and the teaching approach.

**3. Actual teaching experience in a Church School.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUED GROWTH ON THE JOB

**1. Personal study and meditation.** Developing your own devotional life through group worship, private devotions and the actual living out of your faith; continuing to learn through guided reading, training classes, laboratory schools and home study; seeking inspira-

tion, information and fellowship through institutes, conferences and workshops, such as the "Teacher Teach Teacher" program carried on by the Parish Education Board on the Conference level and other joint Lutheran educational conferences or those offered by local Councils of Churches, are all valuable aids.

**2. Study library and drama.** Developing a study library for your Church School staff implies that you yourself have profited by such reading. Drama is also a good study method. Demonstration teaching is actually drama.

**3. Visit public schools and other Church Schools.** You can learn up-to-date methods and techniques. While there are of necessity many differences in public and Church School teaching programs, the basic laws of teaching are the same.

**4. Attend Bible school or take special courses by correspondence.** Methods and techniques are important, but what you teach through them is the most important consideration of all.

## THE TEACHING STAFF

### Selection and Call

As already indicated, there is a need for constant alertness for new prospects for the teaching staff. Careful selection should be made by the pastor and director of Christian education and the necessary personal contacts made. Then a written call to teach a specified grade in a given department for a year's time should be extended by the Board of Deacons. The call should include a written form for reply. Teachers should be formally installed at a Sunday morning worship service.

### Training of Teachers

There are many devoted followers of Christ who are basically qualified to teach but refuse because of a feeling of inadequacy. Given training to develop confidence they often make excellent teachers. A regular teacher training class on Sunday mornings open for all who want to become qualified teachers is an ideal plan. The fourth year of a high school Bible class could be given over to teacher-training. It will be necessary to promote and encourage training classes, institutes and workshops of various kinds. There must be a certain amount of continuous training included in teachers' meetings for the present staff of teachers, keeping them up to date and alert in the work.

### Teachers' Meetings

Teachers' meetings will be a combination of business, study and inspiration.

As the principal focus of attention should be on study, business should be kept at a minimum and handled as much as possible by a smaller group, such as the Board of Christian Education, with necessary announcements being made to the entire group of teachers. Study should include methods, courses, leadership techniques, and the like. The greatest amount of attention should be given to actual departmental lesson study. This should be a detailed study of actual lesson content with aims clearly set forth and help offered, so that each teacher can arrive at these aims for the class. Attention should be paid to individual needs of pupils and group help given on how these needs may be met. All lesson study should be preceded by prayer. United prayer for guidance in regard to specific problems of discipline, difficult home situations that affect the children and other problems that are brought to the attention of the group should be matters of much intercession. Pray also for the normal growth and development in the Christian life of each child. The time thus spent in united prayer and study will greatly stimulate the teachers' individual study and preparation for each assignment.

### **The Church School Library**

Make source materials easily available to your teachers by building up a good library. This should include not only books but maps, flannelgraphs, filmstrips and other visual aids that can be catalogued for use in all departments. The extent to which these materials are used will depend to a great degree upon the promotional ability of both the director of Christian education and the librarian.

You may be fortunate enough to have someone in your congregation who has had training in library procedures and is willing to give time to this service for the church. There should be frequent reminders of what is in the library, as there is a turnover from time to time of the teaching staff. New and prospective teachers, especially, should be encouraged to use the library.

Books should include works on educational psychology, teaching methods, Bible Concordances, biography, good religious fiction, Christian character-building stories, worship programs, stories of hymns and missionary education. Book lists are available through the Board of Parish Education. The books recommended for a Luther League library (list available from the Youth Office) are appropriate also for a Church School staff.

### **THE PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OF THE SCHOOL**

Many a Sunday School lesson has been taught under very crowded and adverse circumstances. A careful study of the available property



and equipment and a little initiative on the part of some leader will bring amazing results in terms of improved conditions. Start by making the very best possible use of what you have. Make sure no space is wasted. Study the most obvious and immediate needs and the means available to supply them. Ladies' Aids, Brotherhoods, young adult organizations and other groups can be challenged and encouraged to contribute toward needed equipment. In the case of youth and adults, the classes themselves can undertake to improve their own classrooms as a class project.

(See "Making the Most of Rooms and Equipment" from the Leadership Education Audio-Visual Kit, available through Audio-Visual Service.)

Where major improvements are necessary, it takes the planning and administration of the Church Boards to effect the needed changes. There must be long-range planning but at the same time an awareness of the improvements that can be made in the meantime with a minimum of expense. Adequate and attractive furnishings and equipment are essential to good teaching and good learning.

Where conditions are obviously bad for teaching, it is not always because there is no chance to improve them; it may be due to a lack of vision and a willingness to accept the "status quo". Progressive and courageous thinking and promotion and a sincere effort to improve existing conditions can revolutionize the thinking of the entire congregation. Complaint and despair will not accomplish the desired aims.

## TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

**1. The Sunday Church School** represents your greatest teaching opportunity with the largest enrollment and most consistent schedule of classes. If there is sufficient room, the Sunday morning hour should include classes for every age level in the congregation from the nursery tots through the adults.

**2. Vacation Church School.** This presents a more "concentrated" teaching opportunity. The Vacation School should serve the entire community without losing its identity as a Lutheran school for teaching Christian doctrines.

Very good material is available through the Church's Department of Parish Education, the Lutheran Bible Institute, and other Lutheran sources.

The local situation will determine when and how long your school will be held. Usually schools have been held from two to three weeks in the month of June. Some churches have experimented with August Vacation Schools with good results, while others have found the conflict with camp and family vacation schedules too great in August.



When the best time for your local situation is determined, it is wise to be consistent year after year so families of children involved can make their summer plans accordingly.

**3. Weekday religious education on released time, or weekday Bible school after school hours.** Where released time from public schools is offered, the religious education program is usually handled through the local Council of Churches with the co-operation of participating churches. Some communities have traditionally strong programs of religious instruction on released time. Every opportunity for Christian instruction should be used. Many church staff workers have given fine leadership to such projects. The necessary authorization from the proper authorities must be obtained and a high standard of work maintained. School authorities and parents must be in accord with the plans.

**4. Cradle Roll.** This is a fine opportunity for adult education on behalf of children. Young mothers can be helped a great deal in the very early religious training of their children. Regular meetings with Cradle Roll mothers should be held. These meetings can serve a double purpose: first, to aid the mothers in the early training of their children; secondly, to bring these young mothers together socially so as to build friendships and help them to help one another as Christian mothers.

Nursery packet material should be sent to the homes of every baptized pre-school child. This project may be organized in various ways. One person may be in charge of the entire nursery group and send out all packet material. Or four different individuals may share in reaching out to the homes where babies were born in a given year. The packet material can also be used as a basis for discussion with the Cradle Roll mothers as they meet.

Home visitation is important in this program. Practical help can best be given when you know the home situation and are aware of individual problems and needs.

**5. Missionary education.** Christianity is not correctly or completely taught if Christ's missionary commission is not emphasized. A "missionary background" for teachers and leaders is best gained by active participation in the local missionary society. The Women's Missionary Society has a comprehensive educational program with which the church staff worker needs to be acquainted regardless of where his major field of activity is. Definite missionary education will be included in some way in the Sunday morning Church School, even though the Children's Division of the Missionary Society may have regular meetings apart from the Sunday School hour. Materials may be obtained through the Society's headquarters at 3939 Pine Grove

Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. The Boards of American and Foreign Missions at 2445 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota, also have information for the mission emphasis in your school.

**6. The Confirmation Department.** The formal confirmation instruction is definitely the pastor's responsibility, but his work is tied in with the entire educational program of the church. Often there are other teachers for this class for the Sunday morning hour. The teacher or teachers for confirmation age groups may be the sponsors for the Junior Luther League. In many cases confirmation classes are definitely tied in with the Luther League through the organization of Junior Leagues.

Confirmation reunions are helpful in stirring up class memories and setting the stage for a reconsecration of confirmation vows. Any means of keeping the unity of the class, such as "round-robin" letters in small classes or a friendly form letter sent out annually in the case of larger groups will be a valuable tie to the home church and an encouragement to some who will lack other sources of encouragement in their Christian life.

Class sponsors for confirmation classes can be a real help in keeping the unity of the class. Such sponsors must be consecrated to Christ and vitally interested in youth.

**7. The High School Bible Class.** We need more Hi-League Bible classes. There is nothing in the world as interesting to young people as the Bible when it is properly presented. At Bible camps which had every conceivable recreational facility, when the youth at the end of the week have been asked: "What hour of the day did you enjoy the most?" the majority have answered: "The Bible study hour."

Church Councils should see that there are many, many more senior classes in our Church Schools, and the Luther Leagues should work with the church Councils. A strong Luther League Bible class strengthens every other part of the Luther League. Remember, "Church youth work that is not rooted in the Bible is not rooted."

If you do not have a senior class, see that one is organized. Get the members of your Luther League interested in a Bible study class by bringing the matter before the group at a Luther League meeting. An especially opportune time is when a group of your Leaguers has just returned from a week at Leadership School or Bible camp or from attendance at a Youth Conference.

The chairman can point out to the group that Bible study is a vital part of a League program, but that heretofore it has not been given the attention it deserves. The discussion ought to center around the need for Bible study by the group. He may ask several Leaguers to give short talks on "Why I would like to read the Bible with greater

understanding," or "What the Bible means to me," or "Why I think we should have a Bible Class."

When your members feel that they want to start a Luther League Bible study class, they will be talking about it among themselves and to others not in the group. That is the best publicity and interest-builder a Bible class can have. It is also a good idea to use the telephone, to write letters and to advertise the class through posters and bulletins.

### **Where and When**

Usually the Sunday morning Bible class meets at the same time as the Church School.

Let the Bible class (instead of having an opening service with the rest of the Sunday school) have its own service—the singing of a hymn if there is a piano in the room, a prayer by a member of the class. Then go right into the Bible study. The class period should not be less than 45 minutes. Some manage to get a solid hour for the Bible study.

The Sunday school superintendent should refrain from raiding the Bible classes for substitute teachers. Not only does that practice deprive the youth of needed study, but also it deprives the younger Church School classes of good teaching which comes from mature experience and adequate preparation. Who shall teach the class? Finding a teacher who is both able and willing to teach a young people's Bible class is the most important part of organizing and maintaining the class. It goes without saying that the teacher must be chosen with care and with much prayerful concern.

### **Counselor-Teacher**

It is well if a counselor of the League serves also as teacher of the senior class. This person should not be loaded down with other duties and responsibilities in the congregation but should be permitted to concentrate on this double task of working with youth, a specialized assignment of tremendous significance for the future of the church.

The principles of variety and a change of pace are very important—normally you wouldn't want to have the same subject at League and at Bible Class in the same week. But if the Bible class teacher is a League counselor, he knows what is being covered in both and can see to it that there is a good variety in the ways the material is presented. The Hi-League Bible class teacher who has been along at the League campfire is able better to understand the youth and get closer to them. At League meetings and in League publications the Bible class is announced and publicized. At Sunday morning Bible class those dodgers for that League program or outing can be distributed.

Where there is a full-time parish worker or youth director or educational director on the church staff, that person is very often in charge of the Luther League and is responsible also for the young people's Bible classes.

One pastor has his confirmation classes promise to attend Bible class at least three years after confirmation. As a result, eighty per cent of the post-confirmation youth are attending Bible class and morning worship regularly. In another large city church, 72 per cent of the high school youth are members of the Bible class.

The key problem in youth work is how we can get our young people into the Word of God and get it to speak to them personally.

Let us have more Luther League Bible classes. Here is a good slogan: "Each Leaguer in Bible class on Sunday morning!"

(See also *God's Outstretched Hand*, pp. 29-34; and *Luther League Handbook*, pp. 98-106.)

8. **Adult Classes.** Bible classes should be held for all ages. No one ever outgrows this need. The division of groups will vary in different congregations. There may be one adult class for both men and women, a men's Bible class, a mother's class or various other groupings. It is a good idea to vary the teaching methods in these classes from time to time.

There may also be special classes for teacher training or adult membership instruction classes.

## FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### The Problem of Summer Schedule

Should regular classes be held during the summer? Many children are absent so much that some continuity is lost. Having only a few in the class discourages the children. These and other arguments are put forth. There will be a certain unavoidable decline in attendance during the vacation season in most localities. This must be recognized but need not result in closing the doors of the Church School.

Classes can be combined, but perhaps a better plan would be to continue regular classes and give the teacher an opportunity to give more personal attention to those who are present, thus helping to solve some individual needs.

Films or filmstrips by departments or for the entire School can be shown during summer months. There are also other visual aids, such as flannelgraph, story telling by simple drama, chalk talks, and various other methods which can be used to good advantage.



## **Special Programs**

In large Sunday Schools it is impossible to have all participate in programs except for group singing. Departmental programs offer one solution to this problem. There can be rotation of departments, classes or individuals as to participation. Some follow the method of asking for volunteers (classes or individuals) who want to take part. This will give you a willing group with which to work but may deprive some child of a chance to participate because he was too shy to volunteer.

Programs should be of an educational and inspirational nature; then even the rehearsals represent a valuable teaching opportunity.

## **The Problem of Crowded Conditions**

A double Sunday School will solve a space problem but will also create some new problems. Where Sunday School and the worship service are held simultaneously, there is a danger that the children and teachers will not attend the worship services unless there is also a multiple worship service. A double corps of teachers will be necessary. The problem of how to split the group is also a real one. Having members of the same family come at different times may work a hardship as to transportation. All of the problems will have to be met according to local conditions and possible solutions. Many congregations are solving the problems occasioned by the necessity of carrying on a multiple schedule on Sundays very successfully.

Meeting crowded conditions in this way should be considered a temporary expedient with forward-looking efforts being made to provide an adequate educational unit to care for the congregation's educational responsibility.

It is a high privilege to be a Christian Education Director. It is a lifelong process of growth and sharing in fulfillment of the apostolic injunction, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth." II Timothy 2:15



## How?

*How shall we teach  
A child to reach  
Beyond himself and touch  
The stars,  
We who have stooped so much?*

*How shall we say  
To him, "The way  
Of life is through the gate  
Of love,"  
We who have learned to hate?*

*How shall we dare  
To teach him prayer  
And turn him toward the way  
Of faith,  
We who no longer pray?*

—MILDRED R. HOWLAND

When any master holds  
"Twixt chin and hand  
A violin of mine  
He will be glad that Stradivari lived,  
Made violins  
And made them of the best.  
For while God gives them skill,  
I give them instruments to play upon,  
God choosing me to help Him.  
Should these hands slake  
I should rob God,  
Leaving a blank instead of violins.  
He could not make Antonio Stradivari's violins  
Without Antonio.

—George Eliot



## CHAPTER X

### THE MINISTER OF MUSIC

**“Serve the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.” (Psalm 100:2)**

One of the most rapidly growing fields of Christian service is the ministry of music. Increasing numbers of ministers of music, serving on a full-time basis, will be needed in the coming years. There is a growing recognition of the significance of this ministry on the part of our congregations. Young people with musical gifts can go ahead to prepare for this assignment in the confidence that positions will be available and remuneration will be adequate so that they can think of this calling in terms of a rich and satisfying life work.

As a general rule, the term “minister of music” refers to an individual who serves a congregation in the dual capacity of organist and choir director, and it is in this sense that the term will be used in this chapter; at the same time it must be recognized that many churches employ two persons (part-time) to give leadership to the music-life of the congregation—one as organist and the other as choir director.

Music, since the earliest Biblical times, has been a vital part of the worship life of God’s people. For example, the Psalms of the Old Testament were written to be sung, rather than read. Music often

touches human hearts not easily moved by the spoken Word. It has power to inspire the worshipper and to lift his thoughts heaven-ward. The consecrated minister of music can therefore render a most important service in the worship life of a congregation.

### **Qualifications and Training**

The minister of music has a holy calling. His talent and artistic ability alone do not qualify him for a dedicated service to the Lord of the Church. There are few fields in which personal consecration is more important. The "artist" who is unduly conscious of his own talents and who is slow to recognize them as a gift of God, to be used to His glory, stands in danger of hindering rather than helping the Holy Spirit. Paul's admonition, "Let no man think more highly of himself than he ought to think" applies to all Christians, not least of all to the church organist and choir director.

The humble minister of music recognizes that music is the hand-maiden of worship and that good churchmanship is even more important than good musicianship. This conviction will reflect itself in countless ways in his dealings with the choirs, the pastor, the Board of Administration, the music committee and the members of the congregation. Others will be quick to sense his philosophy that music—even sacred music—is not an end in itself but a means to the end that God's Name might be magnified in the hearts of His people. Further expressions of this basic conviction will be unfolded in the following pages.

The minister of music will sense daily his need for God's grace in the development of his own personality. He will be dealing constantly with great numbers of people, and not always under the calmest, most subdued conditions. (There will be times when he will wonder how in the world the "cherub choir" ever got that name!) While it has been held that musicians, like other artists, are by nature temperamental, the church musician will pray and strive to sublimate his ego and over-sensitiveness in order that his own whims will not be projected unduly into the picture.

Basically, the principal qualifications of the minister of music, in addition to a good working knowledge of the skills of his profession, are love for God and love for people. Where these are present, the choir director and organist is equipped to perform a valued service to the congregation. The late "Prof" Robert N. Pearson, who as a minister of music and Luther League song leader endeared himself to tens of thousands of Christian youth, aptly summarized the qualifications of the minister of music when he said, "We need consecrated musical

leaders, steeped in the spiritual values of the tonal world, rich in emotional experience and thoroughly equipped musically."

All desiring to enter the church music field as a vocation should have basic instruction in church music history, theory, harmony, voice and choral training and, of course, piano and organ. Our Church colleges are admirably equipped to offer such training. In addition, the minister of music may take advantage of numerous opportunities to continue his training by enrolling for short courses, music institutes or festivals which are offered by various institutions throughout the country. For example, Augustana College, Rock Island, Ill., sponsors a church musicians' workshop (a special week of clinical training for ministers of music) at Camp Augustana each summer.

A thorough knowledge of the doctrines of the Lutheran Church is a "must" for the church musician. For example, it would be out of order for a Lutheran choir to sing Mozart's "Requiem Mass" while Brahms's "Requiem" would be entirely appropriate. The qualified minister of music not only knows this; he knows **why**. In a similar way, a basic knowledge of the liturgies and symbolism of the Church, the hymnal and lectionary, the Church year and Church polity is important to the effectiveness of the church musician's service.

There are eight areas of service to which the minister of music will apply himself. These include:

### 1. The Worship Services

The hymns (usually chosen by the pastor), anthems and organ music should be correlated to the theme for the Sunday so that the entire service will flow smoothly as a unified and integrated act of worship. The prelude, offertory and postlude should be played in such a way that these portions of the service do not call attention to the instrument or instrumentalist but contribute to the total worship experience of the congregation.

The anthem should be chosen on the basis of the text but should also be of good musical quality. Fortunately, the Lutheran Church enjoys a rich heritage of choral music so that there is no need to introduce second-rate music into the service.

The organist and choir director will seek to remain in the background as much as possible throughout the service. (In this case the childhood adage is reversed, for **the church musician should be heard but not seen!**) The growing trend to locate the organ and choir in the balcony or in a side transept off the nave of the church is an indication of a growing awareness of the proper place of music in the worship service.



## 2. The Church Choirs

The primary purpose of the church choir is to lead the congregation in worship. The first duty and privilege of the choir is to know and to sing well the hymns and liturgical responses. As a rule, the best plan is to have the choir sing the hymns and responses **in unison**. It is a good plan to spend a few moments at each rehearsal running through the hymns to be sung at the Sunday service.

Many congregations have as many as five choirs. These are usually divided, as to membership, into the following groups:

- A. Cherub choir for children 4-8 years of age.
- B. Children's choir for children 9-12 years of age.
- C. Confirmation choir. (May be correlated with Junior League)
- D. Youth choir for high school youth. (Should be correlated with Hi-League activity)
- E. Senior choir for those of post-high school age.

In addition, the choirmaster will have occasion to work with special groups, such as a male chorus, a women's chorus, small groups from within the choirs, etc. One alert minister of music organized a "Golden Age" choir (for members of the church over 50 years of age) to sing at the congregation's anniversary services and at other special occasions. The availability of these special musical groups will greatly enhance the programs of the various church organizations.

**Choir rehearsals.** Anthems should be rehearsed at least six weeks in advance, if possible. This plan not only assures adequate preparation; it lessens problems occasioned by absenteeism at rehearsals. Of course, the choir director will devote most of his rehearsal time to the anthems to be prepared for the next two Sundays.

Disciplinary problems, even for children's and youth choirs, will be at a minimum if the rehearsals are well planned and motivated and if the choir is kept busy. A good general rule regarding attendance is that if the choir member misses two successive rehearsals he cannot sing on the following Sunday unless he is granted a special dispensation by the choirmaster.

Choir rehearsals should be conducted in a spirit of reverence. There should be a brief devotional period in connection with each practice, conducted by the minister of music or by various members of the choir. Such a devotional could include the Scripture text and the collect for the next Sunday, or a free prayer by the leader. The theme of the devotions should emphasize the thought that each member of the choir is in reality a minister of music. There should also be a brief prayer before the Sunday service. The following prayer is appropriate:

**"Bless, O Lord, us who minister in Thy temple; grant that what we sing with our lips we may believe in our hearts, and what we believe in our hearts we may show forth in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen."**

It is important that the choirmaster is a good steward of his time. Choir rehearsals should begin and end on time. Ten minutes wasted at each rehearsal really involves a total of 300 lost minutes when 30 singers are involved. Good advance planning will do much to make each rehearsal moment count.

Many choirs enjoy occasional social functions, with the various sections taking turns in serving as hosts. Such activities can be helpful in strengthening the fellowship and esprit de corps of the group. They should not be held in connection with regular rehearsals, however.

Should new members be admitted to the choir on the basis of preliminary tryouts? Most choirmasters will want to audition prospective members, not for the purpose of determining whether the applicant should be permitted to become a part of the group but to ascertain how his voice can best be used. Most directors accept all applicants who have a sincere desire to serve as members of the choir, regardless of individual abilities or lack of the same. There may be occasional exceptions to this rule in unusual situations. The desire to serve is an important trait and should not be discouraged. There are more valuable things at stake than the technical excellency of the group! Even a monotone is not always a hopeless case. After a period of training and singing with a choral group, many supposed "monotones" have developed into fine singers.

### **3. The Church School**

The minister of music will wisely maintain close contact with the Church School. He will attend teachers' meetings, help in selecting good music for the children, assist in training the youngsters to sing the hymns of the Church and to know and appreciate its liturgy, be alert to find and train pianists, give guidance to leaders planning Christmas and Easter programs and help young adults (perhaps senior choir members) to serve as song leaders in the Church School.

Generally, it is best if the minister of music does not serve as pianist for the Church School. He will perform a more valuable service by training others for this work. Because the Church School is the source of recruits for the children's choirs and for future senior choirs, the minister of music will want to do all in his power to cultivate an appreciation for the best in sacred music in the hearts of the children of the congregation.

#### **4. The Vacation Church School**

While the minister of music's Sunday schedule may not permit him to enter into the Sunday-by-Sunday program of the Church School, he does have a rich opportunity for service in connection with the Vacation Church School. For example, he could supervise a special music hour each day, either for the entire school or (preferably) for each department. Included in such a course could be elementary vocal training and harmony, teaching the children to memorize one hymn each week, backgrounding a number of hymns in terms of lyrics, authorship, composition and the story "behind" the hymn, teaching the liturgy and Church music history, playing recordings of great sacred music, making use of a tape recorder, leading in fun songs and explaining the intricacies of the organ—how it works, the various stops, etc.

#### **5. Camps**

A course similar to the one outlined above would be a valuable addition to the curriculum of a Bible Camp. In addition, the minister of music could serve as singspiration leader and director of the camp choir. A camping situation offers the possibility of a more varied repertoire of sacred song, particularly in connection with informal outdoor services, such as campfires and "Galilean programs." Care should be taken, however, to see that there is a good balance of chorals, hymns and choruses in the over-all camp music program.

#### **6. Church Organizations**

The minister of music should not be the official pianist at the meetings of church organizations. However, he can render a valuable service as an advisor to the program committees and can also be alert for opportunities to enhance the knowledge of members in the field of sacred music appreciation. For example, he could instruct the members of various church groups in the meaning of the Church year, tell about the lives of great church musicians, lead a study of favorite hymns or introduce a new liturgical service.

The minister of music who loves young people can wield a tremendous influence over them through leading their sings at League campfires, or on the way to a youth convention or camp or in a hundred different situations. The Leagues in his church will truly be singing Leagues and will be much the stronger for it.

#### **7. Special Musical Services**

Virtually every choral group in the congregation will sponsor at least one seasonal concert during the year, usually in connection with

the Christmas, Lenten or Easter seasons. The word "concert" in this connection leaves something to be desired since the very word connotes performance rather than worship. A thoughtfully planned service of sacred music can be a mutually-enriching experience for the musicians and congregation alike. It will be most effective if it is planned around a certain theme or to celebrate a specific Church festival.

Here the imagination and resources of the minister of music are really challenged. If he has a multiple choir program, each choir may be assigned a particular choral service to prepare, or several choirs may work together on a service. There is a good deal of fine music for the minor festivals as well as for Christmas and Easter. Epiphany, Ascension Day, Trinity Sunday, Reformation Sunday, and All Saints' Day can be the occasions of inspiring services of song. Pentecost, sometimes called "the forgotten festival", also offers rich opportunities.

There are many other possibilities, such as a service built around the many musical settings of the Psalms, a service representing each period in the history of the Church and a service of favorite hymns based on a poll of the congregation. (Congregational participation in the singing would be an important feature of such a service.)

**Weddings.** It is customary for the bride to confer with the organist in the matter of selecting the music (both organ and vocal) for the wedding service. The organist should be prepared to suggest appropriate sacred numbers and to discourage the use of secular music for any part of the service. In such instances the church musician has an opportunity to bear a witness concerning the sacredness of the wedding service. If, as sometimes happens, the pastor asks the organist to supervise the wedding rehearsals, it should be recognized that these occasions, too, represent opportunities to instruct members of the wedding parties concerning the sanctity of marriage and the reverence which is due unto the House of God.

**Funerals.** The organist usually has a voice in the selection of music for the funeral service. A good deal of overly-sentimental music of questionable quality has found its way into many funeral services. Often, too, the doctrinal content of the songs is contrary to our Lutheran beliefs. The alert organist will be quick to suggest music which expresses clearly the great Christian truths concerning the issues of death, resurrection, time and eternity.

**Baptisms.** Most baptisms, happily, are held in the church in connection with a regular Sunday service. Music can add much to the beauty of the baptismal service. A simple hymn or anthem by a children's choir is particularly appropriate. At a private baptism in a home the minister of music could arrange for a soloist to sing.



## Other Considerations

In addition to these areas of service, the minister of music will often give individual instruction to members and non-members of the congregation in piano, organ, voice, etc. Permission to engage in such activity, especially when such services are offered in return for a fee, should be secured in writing from the Board of Trustees of the congregation.

The administration of the ministry of music in a local congregation is often the responsibility of a music committee which could be a sub-committee of the Board of Administration or a special committee consisting of one Deacon, one Trustee, one representative of the choir and one elected representative of the congregation. The pastor and minister of music usually serve as *ex officio* members of the committee. The functions of the music committee should be clearly determined and a constitution governing its activities drawn up. As a rule, the committee meets on call to act upon such matters as the calling of the minister of music, the music policy to be followed, the physical equipment needed for the choir, and the like.

Some of the smaller churches occasionally seek for a parish worker who can combine that assignment with service as an organist and choir director. The smaller congregation, by pooling what it has available by way of funds for office work, parish work and music is thus able to get a full-time worker. Some young people have found an assignment of that nature a good orientation into church staff work.

As a rule, however, after a year or two the worker goes on to an assignment either in full-time music or full-time parish work (without the music responsibilities). It is becoming increasingly difficult to find persons to fill the music-parish work combination assignments. And, of course, in a larger church the two areas of service should not be combined in one job because the load would be too heavy for the worker and a satisfactory service could not be rendered in either of the two fields.

Our larger congregations, especially, are recognizing increasingly the fact that a minister of music has a "full-time" job. In answer to those who may wonder what the choirmaster and organist does between Sundays, the following activities from the calendar of one minister of music suggests a typical week's program: Meet with the League, personal study and practice (as important for the church musician as for the pastor!), call on parents of young singers ("Why was John absent from choir?"), call on prospective choir members, plan with the pastor the worship services for coming weeks, plan organ and choral music for every service, prepare for and conduct rehearsals, maintain correspondence and personal contacts with choir members and partici-



pate in most of the areas outlined in No. 1 through No. 8 on the previous pages. This same minister of music concluded: "No one day is 'typical'—that's the glory of it!"

The minister of music has a big and demanding service to render. His is also an eminently satisfying and rewarding work. He has an opportunity to witness of his faith to many different groups and individuals during the course of each week; he has many chances to do personal counseling; he has a constant sense of creative partnership with God; he has an opportunity to increase in others an appreciation of our rich Lutheran heritage of sacred music; he enjoys countless open doors to personal musical advancement—creative writing, composing, arranging; he has the joy of seeing the progress made by the singers; he has the privilege of being part of a "team" with the pastor and other members of the church staff; he has a unique opportunity of creating harmony in a world filled with discord and, above all, the reward of knowing that deep, inward joy and satisfaction which comes to all who live for the one purpose of serving Christ and His Church.

Where else in the world can a person experience the thrill of the minister of music who has just witnessed a soul won for Christ through the medium of sacred song, or who has seen an entire congregation inspired by the music which he has had a share in creating?

Truly, the minister of music stands in the succession of the angels as an adventurer with Christ!

**May our life purpose be that of Mary as expressed in her beautiful reply to the angel at the Annunciation:**

**“I am here to serve the Lord.” (Luke 1:38—Moffatt’s translation.)**



## CHAPTER XI

### THE DEACONESS AS A CHURCH STAFF WORKER

**“For the love of Christ constrains us . . . He died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him Who for their sakes died and rose again.” (II Corinthians 5:14-15)**

To use the deaconess motto, “The love of Christ constrains us”, is to express the motivation of every child of God who serves Christ in gratitude for His great gift of salvation.

To serve through the diaconate does not mean that in this area one needs a greater motivation or a greater love. The diaconate does provide, however, the advantage of special training for a wide variety of fields of service with the fellowship and strength of an organized Church institution supporting the worker.

The deaconess training school represents one of the opportunities offered by the Church for training church staff workers. The various Lutheran bodies throughout the United States have ten such schools to train young women of the Church for Christian service. The Augustana Deaconess School is conducted by the Immanuel Deaconess Institute of Omaha, Nebraska. Young women over eighteen years of age, of sound Christian convictions and with an earnest purpose to

serve Christ through His Church can enroll in the deaconess school and be trained by the Church for nine major types of services including local church staff work.

### **Deaconess Training**

Preparation received through the deaconess school for the church staff vocations includes one year of general study, orientation and practical experience in all of the fields of church service offered through the diaconate; at least one year of Bible school training; and one or two years of college work. Other special training or extension of any of these courses can be given as indicated by individual needs.

This educational opportunity is offered by the Church at full scholarship. This is possible because of the co-operative plan of financing within the Diaconate. Deaconesses work on a salary basis, with full maintenance and retirement benefits, based on the principle of lifetime service, although they are not bound to such a commitment. Contrary to the thinking of many people, the Lutheran Diaconate is vastly different from the "service orders" of the Roman Church.

Personal freedom and responsibility before God are consistent with our Lutheran understanding of Scripture; neither the Church nor any organization of the Church wishes to impair this basic principle in any way. If a girl trains as a deaconess, but leaves (and she is free to do so) the organized Diaconate before repaying the Church according to the co-operative plan, she will be informed of the balance due the Church. She may also, if she prefers, receive deaconess training as a special student, paying the cost of her training, but without tuition.

### **Clinical Training**

Deaconess students preparing for church staff service will have both theory and practice in all departments of local congregational work. Classroom lectures by experienced workers on the parish level in visitation, youth work, secretarial work, Christian education, etc., are followed by practical supervised experience in a congregational setting. Hospital and institutional visitation experience is given under the guidance and instruction of the chaplain. Brief home nursing instruction (without full nurses' training) is given when some sick-care background is advisable. Sunday school and weekday Bible school programs are carried on throughout the training period with vacation Bible school experience offered during the summer, either at Immanuel or in some other community. Summer camp work, institutes, leadership schools and local League activities give experience in youth work. Training for the ministry of music is received at an approved

school by the students whose talents and desires indicate that such training is in order. Elementary secretarial and office training are given at Immanuel with more advanced training at an approved business school if required.

The deaconess serves the Church which has trained her under the organizational pattern of the Deaconess Institute. Although calls are handled through the institution, it remains the privilege of the deaconess to determine her place of service, having enjoyed the advantage of the vocational guidance offered by experienced leaders of the institution. Careful consideration of individual personality traits and the specific needs of the local situation are taken into account in the placement guidance of a deaconess. The organized diaconate is in a favorable position in the placement of deaconesses due to its intimate knowledge of the applicant plus its wide knowledge of various local congregational needs.

With the growing needs of the Church, especially in youth and educational work on the local level, it has been impossible to keep up with the demands for such trained workers. Pastors and church staff workers who are at the "grass roots" can do much in the way of offering vocational guidance to the youth of the Church, showing them the avenues of service within the Church and also showing them the opportunities for specific training for such service.

Alongside of the doctrine that every calling is a holy calling must be stressed the doctrine of the Church and its ministry. Only when the congregation is adequately staffed with top-notch workers of Christian consecration can the laity be mobilized completely to fulfill their calling as priests unto God. There is no either-or here. It is emphatically a both-and proposition. A congregation, in which the pastor is handicapped because the church is badly understaffed, cannot hope to alert and equip its membership to a realization and a living out of the implications of the priesthood of all believers.

As we pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers, we must be ready to prepare them for their service and then speed them on their way in order that the waiting congregations might have adequately trained help for every phase of Kingdom work.



**The great purpose of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.**

# APPENDIX

## A. QUESTIONS ANSWERED BRIEFLY

**1. Q—What is the Association of Church Staff Workers?**

A—The Association of Church Staff Workers is an organization for all church staff workers of the Augustana Lutheran Church. It is sponsored by the Board of Youth Activities and exists for the purpose of strengthening the workers in their common task, advancing the standards of work and encouraging recruiting for the church staff vocations.

**2. Q—Where can I get information regarding openings for church staff workers and make application for a position in this field?**

A—The Augustana Lutheran Church Youth Office, 2445 Park Avenue, Minneapolis 4, Minnesota.

**3. Q—How does one go about to apply?**

A—The Board of Youth Activities has been designated as a clearing house for applications for the church staff vocations. Write for a four-page application blank, fill it out and return it to the Youth Office together with six copies of a photo or snapshot of yourself. The Youth Office then processes the application by writing for the six references and by making a half-dozen copies of the complete application.

**4. Q—How is one's application handled?**

A—The Youth Office sends to the applicant a list of all the openings throughout the Church, including some details concerning the openings and the proper persons to contact. The applicant is instructed to write directly to any church whose opening sounds appealing and to mention that a copy of his application is on file at the Youth Office. If the pastor is interested in the applicant, he will write to the Youth Office for a copy of the complete application and will also arrange to have the applicant visit his parish some weekend at the expense of the parish. This visit and the "on the scenes" interview are very important. The pastor and the applicant keep the Youth Office informed of their progress and notify the Youth Office immediately when an opening has been filled so that the applicant's name may be added to the Church Staff Workers' Association mailing list. A person placing an application should stay on in his present work

until he gets a definite offer; meanwhile making the matter a part of his daily prayers. Placing an application does not guarantee the applicant a position; neither does it obligate him to accept the openings which may be offered him. Placing an application is simply a way of exploring whether God has an open door for that person in the direction of the Church vocations.

**5. Q—What about a church job for the summer?**

A—A summer position in a church can offer a splendid opportunity to test one's tentative vocational decision while at the same time receiving valuable practical experience. Write to the Youth Office for suggestions. Caravaning is a very creative experience. A summer at Bethphage Institute, Axtell, Nebraska, would be an enriching and rewarding work. A job as a counselor at camp or teaching Vacation Church School or working with migrants or in an overseas work camp will also widen horizons.

**6. Q—What should be included in an official call from a congregation?**

A—The call should state:

- 1) The duties of your position—if one of the five major phases of church staff work or a combination of phases, such as youth work and music, office work and visitation, etc. Any special emphasis or requirements that will be expected of the worker should also be indicated.
- 2) The working conditions, hours, vacation and sick leave allowances.
- 3) The salary and other material considerations.
- 4) The date when service is to begin.
- 5) Any special recommendations from the congregation or Board of Administration.

**7. Q—What is the usual schedule of working hours?**

A—It is rarely a straight eight-hour day schedule. Some of your work will have to be done during the evenings and on Sundays. A reasonable adjustment for evening work should be made. Some churches give accumulated days off after a heavy schedule in busy seasons. There should be at least one day off a week. The folks who are doing this work love it so much and find it such a creative experience they usually volunteer to work beyond the forty-hour week. Actually, the church staff worker will not work any longer hours than a goodly number of faithful members in the parish (both

younger and older) who give a good deal of volunteer time to the church evenings and weekends as Church School teachers, choir members, organization officers, Board and committee members, over and above the time they spend at their regular jobs.

**8. Q—What is a reasonable load for a church staff worker?**

A—One who is secretary, visitor, youth leader and has many other tasks all rolled up into the one office cannot be expected to do a complete job in any one of them. You will have to do the most necessary things and offer as much organizational leadership as possible in order to rally and co-ordinate the membership of the congregation for volunteer service. Routine office work can be done by volunteers; calling committees or teams can be organized for visitation; Luther League counselors can assist with the youth program.

**9. Q—Where can I get source material for my work?**

A—The Augustana Youth Office, 2445 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota, has an excellent supply of available materials. The Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Illinois; Women's Missionary Society Headquarters, 3939 Pine Grove, Chicago, Illinois; and the Parish Education Office, 2445 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, also have excellent materials to draw from for your work. The Youth and Parish Education offices will also be happy to brief any worker. Some congregations send a new worker on salary and expenses to Minneapolis for a week or two for orientation at the Church House before the worker commences his tasks in the local parish.

**10. Q—Are there any scholarships for church staff workers?**

A—Available are general scholarships for preparation for Christian service. Contact the Youth Office or the Board of Christian Higher Education at 2445 Park Avenue, Minneapolis 4, Minn., for further information. The Immanuel Deaconess Institute offers full scholarships for deaconess students preparing for church staff vocations.

**11. Q—What salary can I expect?**

A—It is impossible to make a categorical answer, since the salary conditions will vary with each situation. Such factors as the age, training, experience and ability of the worker, the size of the congregation and the economic conditions of the time (and of the community) will all be a part of the picture. In

general, salary conditions compare favorably with wages paid for somewhat similar services in the business world. In addition to the basic salary, congregations generally provide a travel allowance. There is often a review of the salary after the first six months and then at least annually thereafter as congregations reward the worker for faithful and continuing service.

**12. Q—Can I get Social Security?**

A—Yes. Social Security is available to church staff workers provided all staff members in a given church sign up for it. Consult with your pastor or the chairman of the Board of Trustees if you are interested.

Investigate other savings and insurance plans, too.

**13. Q—Where shall I work?**

A—Church staff workers are needed in the East, in the West, in the North, in the South—in big cities and small cities, in towns and rural areas, in old, historic congregations and young mission churches, in both downtown and suburban areas. Some are drawn to one assignment, some to another. With most people, the challenge of a particular opening as its needs and opportunities match the individual's training and experience—plus the sense of congeniality in being a member of the working team on a church staff—are more important considerations than geography. Don't close your mind to the possibility of working in a completely new and different part of the country; sometimes it can be a tremendously stimulating thing to get into a completely new area. It is a continuing miracle of God to see how deeply He is concerned about His Church and how in answer to believing prayer He directs the needed worker to the right place.

**14. Q—What if I desire to move?**

A—If you feel that your service is completed in one parish and you could do more effective work by moving to another field, you may contact the Youth Office as to openings in other parishes. When moving from one parish to another, be sure that you give your present church ample notice so that steps can be taken to find your successor.

**15. Q—Should the church staff worker be formally installed?**

A—Yes, by all means! It would be wise to have this installation service conducted as a part of the Sunday morning worship service on the worker's first Sunday in the parish. Such a



service will be a means of introducing the worker to the congregation and will help him to feel that he is a part of the congregational "family." It will also offer the pastor a strategic opportunity in which to challenge the congregation to support the worker with its prayers, good will and co-operation. The suggested "Installation Service for Church Staff Workers" (Section C of this Appendix) may be adapted to fit your specific situation.

### Make Me Thy Laborer

*Make me Thy laborer,  
Let me not dream of ever looking back,  
Let not my knees be feeble, hands be slack,  
O make me strong to labor, strong to bear,  
From the rising of the morning till the stars appear.*

*Make me Thy warrior,  
On whom Thou canst depend to stand the brunt  
Of any perilous charge on any front.  
Give me skill to handle sword and spear,  
From the rising of the morning till the stars appear.*

*Not far from us, those stars—  
Unseen as angels and yet looking through  
The quiet air, the day's transparent blue.  
What shall we know, and feel, and see, and hear  
When the sunset colors kindle and the stars appear?*

—AMY CARMICHAEL

## B. RECOMMENDED READING

(The following books have been recommended by members of the Church Staff Workers' Association and by the Youth, Parish Education and Evangelism offices of the Augustana Lutheran Church.)

### Bible Study

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| "The Gospels" and "Letters to Young Churches"—J. B. Phillips | "The Bible and Its Use"—Nolde and Kaufman      |
| "Complete Concordance to the Holy Scriptures"—Crudens        | "Old Testament Commentary"—Alleman and Flack   |
| "One-Volume Bible Commentary"—Dummelow                       | "New Testament Commentary"—Alleman             |
| "Pocket Bible Handbook"—Halley                               | Bible Commentaries—Charles R. Erdman           |
| "The Interpreter's Bible"                                    | "God's Outstretched Hand"—Wilton E. Bergstrand |
| "Westminster Dictionary of the Bible"—Davis                  |  |

### Worship, Devotional, Inspirational

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| "Abundant Living" and "The Christ of the Indian Road"—E. Stanley Jones              | "In His Steps"—Charles M. Sheldon  |
| "Streams in the Desert"—Mrs. C. E. Cowman   | "The Will of God"—Leslie Weatherhead   |
| "God in Our Home"—Daniel Nystrom  | "They Walked with God" and "They Talked with God"—Carl W. Segerhammar        |
| "Going God's Way" and "Living God's Way"—Reuben K. Youngdahl                        | "A Faithful Guide to Peace with God"—C. O. Rosenius                          |
| "Lives That Glorify God"—Amos T. Lundquist  | "My Utmost for His Highest"—Oswald Chambers                                  |
| "A Diary of Private Prayer"—John Baillie  | "With Christ in the School of Prayer"—Andrew Murray                          |
| "Christ and the Fine Arts"—Cynthia Pearl Maus                                       | "Kept for the Master's Use"—Frances Havergal                                 |
| "The Story of Our Hymns"—E. E. Ryden  | "What Jesus Means to Me"—H. W. Gockel  |
| "The Man of Sorrows"—Albert T. Steinhäuser  | "Our Calling"—Einar Billing  |
| "Why I Am a Christian" and "Prayer"—O. Hallesby                                     | "Paths to Happier Living"—Carla Holtermann                                   |
| "Life in His Name" and "Have Faith in God—He Answers Prayer"—S. M. Miller           | "Christmas Voices"—P. O. Bersell   |
| "Youth's Favorite Poems" (Vol. I-VII)—Edited by Wilton E. and Dolores E. Bergstrand | "The Greatest Story Ever Told"—Fulton Oursler                                |
| "March to Win"—Oscar C. Hanson  | "Life Together"—Dietrich Bonhoeffer  |
| "The Cost of Discipleship"—Dietrich Bonhoeffer                                      | "The Predicament of Modern Man" and "Your Other Vocation"—Elton B. Trueblood |
|   | "The Screwtape Letters" and "Christian Behaviour"—C. S. Lewis                |

## Biography

- "A Man Called Peter"—Catherine Marshall  
 "You Asked About Luther"—George Hall  
 "Luther Now"—Hanns Lilje  
 "Katherine—Wife of Luther"—Clara Schreiber  
 "Here I Stand"—Roland Bainton  
 "The Valley of the Shadow"—Hanns Lilje  
 "Who Walk Alone"—Perry Burgess  
 "Angel Unaware"—Dale Evans Rogers  
 "White Angakok"—Erling Nicolai Rolfsrud

## Fiction

- "The Robe" and "The Big Fisherman"—Lloyd C. Douglas  
 "The Silver Chalice"—Thomas Costain  
 "A Lantern in Her Hand"—Bess Streeter Aldrich  
 "Rivers to the Sea"—Irene Strommen  
 "The Silver Trumpet"—J. Wesley Ingles

## Youth Work

- "Adolescent Character and Personality"—Havighurst and Taba  
 "Sincerely in Him"—Marcus Rieke  
 "The Call to Youth"—Edited by Kenneth Priebe  
 "In the Direction of Dreams"—Violet Wood  
 "Youth and the Church"—Leon C. Palmer  
 "Facts of Life and Love"—Evelyn Duvall  
 "Face Your Life with Confidence"—William E. Hulme  
 "Counseling Youth"—Wilton E. Bergstrand  
 "Young Laymen—Young Church"—John Oliver Nelson  
 "Adolescence and Youth"—Paul H. Landis  
 "The Fun Encyclopedia"—E. O. Harbin  
 "Group Games"—Edited by Lorraine Bergstrand  
 "Better Ways of Growing Up"—John E. Crawford  
 "Modern Rules of Parliamentary Procedure"—Robert D. Leigh  
 "About Myself"—Nevin C. Harner  
 "Toward Understanding Youth"—Ruth C. Wick  
 "So You Want to Help People"—Rudolph Wittenberg  
 "The Luther League Handbook"—Wilton E. and Lorraine Bergstrand  
 "Living High in High School"—Ruth Peterson, Wilton E. and Dolores E. Bergstrand  
 "Banquet Lore"—Lorraine Bergstrand and Lorraine Telander  
 "My Luther League Scrapbook"—Wilton E. Bergstrand  
 "Older Youth"—Edited by Wilton E. Bergstrand  
 "Who Will Go?"—Mary Sandberg and Wilton E. Bergstrand  
 "Feature Programs"—Edited by Lorraine Bergstrand  
 "Youth Programs" Quarterlies (File this material topically)

## Christian Education

- "Understanding the Child"—Alfred Schmeiding  
 "Understanding Our Pupils"—Milton Haker  
 "Understanding Your Child"—James Hymes  
 "Guiding Workers in Christian Education"—Frank M. McKiffer  
 "Methods of Teaching in the Church School"—Ove S. Olson  
 Methods for Workers:  
 "With Nursery Children"—Eleanor Stelzner  
 "With Beginner Children"—Luice Gouker

- "With Primary Children"—R u t h Weissling  
 "With Juniors"—Reba Shue Alexander  
 "With Intermediates"—Erwin Spees  
 "With Seniors"—Milton Haker  
 "The Way of Salvation in the Lutheran Church"—G. H. Gerberding  
 "Truths We Live By"—Martin Heineken  
 "The Awakened Heart"—Robert W. Stackel  
 "The Church and Its Teaching Work"—Paul Vieth

## Music

- "The Music of the Church"—David E. Berg  
 "Music in the History of the Western Church"—Edward Dickinson  
 "Education in Church Music"—Karl P. Harrington  
 "Luther and Music"—Paul Nettl  
 "Music in History"—McKinney and Anderson  
 "Steps Toward a Singing Church"—Donald Kettring  
 "Music in Christian Education"—Edith Lovell Thomas  
 "The Choirmaster's Workbook"—Dayton W. Nordin  
 "Guideposts for the Church Musician"—Paul Swarm

## Administration and Evangelism

- "A Planned Program for the Church Year"—Weldon Crossland  
 "A Church Is Born"—Dwight H. Shelhart  
 "Effective Evangelism"—G e o r g e E. Sweazey  
 "Revive Thy Church Beginning with Me"—Samuel M. Shoemaker  
 "Nurse, Pastor, and Patient"—Granger Westberg  
 "Personal Evangelism"—A. W. Knock  
 "Church Work in the City"—Frederick A. Shippey  
 "Rural Church Administration"—Rockwell C. Smith  
 "Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission Manual" (Published by the Lutheran Evangelism Council)  
 "The Lord Thy Healer"—J. Sheatsley  
 "Baptism and Evangelism"—Oscar A. Anderson  
 "What Is a Christian?" (pamphlet)—George Aus

The Lutheran Evangelism Council, 422 S. 5th St., Minneapolis, Minn., also has a splendid supply of pamphlets and tracts related to personal and parish evangelism.

## C. INSTALLATION SERVICE FOR CHURCH STAFF WORKERS

(Should be adapted by pastor to fit the local parish situation)

Dear friend in Christ Jesus:

Hear the Word of God as it is written in St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians in the fourth chapter:

"But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. . . . And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

These are the duties and opportunities of the office to which you have been called:

(Select and enlarge upon the appropriate paragraphs below)

**Parish Secretaries:** To serve as church office receptionist, to handle the pastor's correspondence, to keep the church files and records up to date, to prepare the bulletins, parish paper, special letters and other materials to be included in the regular and special mailings of the church, to serve as financial secretary of the congregation and to carry out the other tasks related to the work of the church office.

**Parish Visitors:** To bring a personal Christian witness in the visitation of present and prospective members of the congregation, remembering the sick, the shut-ins and the parents of the children who are in or belong in the Church School, to help mobilize the congregation for parish evangelism and to counsel with those members and friends who stand in need of the ministrations of the Church.

**Youth Directors:** To take a personal interest in the youth of this congregation and community, to guide them in their personal living and in their corporate League activity, to counsel with them in their problems and to assist in establishing them more firmly upon the foundation of the Word of God, to the end that they may be won, kept and used for Christ and equipped for an ever-growing service to Christ and His Church.

**Directors of Christian Education:** To help not only the children and youth but all the members of the congregation to grow in fellow-



ship with God, in an understanding and acceptance of the Christian faith and in an expression of that faith in Christian living by guiding the work of the Church School and strengthening the total educational program of the congregation.

Parish Workers: (Will include some of the aspects of each of the above areas; select those duties which will be a part of this worker's assignment.)

Ministers of Music: To demonstrate that music is the handmaiden of worship and a gift of God whereby not only the choirs but all members of the congregation might lift their hearts and their voices in the worship of His Name, to serve as organist of the church and as director of the church choirs, and to increase in the minds of all an appreciation for our rich Lutheran heritage of sacred music.

I, therefore, ask you: Do you accept the office to which you have been called, and do you promise to discharge your duties faithfully and to the best of your ability, as in the sight of God? If so, declare it by saying, "Yes, by the help of God."

*Answer:* Yes, by the help of God.

(Take the right hand.) Upon this, your declaration, I declare you to be the installed \_\_\_\_\_ (name the position) of this \_\_\_\_\_ (name the congregation) and authorize you to exercise the duties and privileges of your office, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

It is also my desire at this time to say a special word to the congregation. The coming of this staff member is the result of the prayers of our entire church. We thank God that He has sent this friend to help us in the work of our congregation. It is important that we realize that he (she) has not come to do the work that any of us are supposed to do, but to help us by rendering that additional leadership and service which would not be possible without his (her) joining our staff. Let us therefore welcome him (her) most warmly, and support him (her) with our good will, with our hearty co-operation and with our faithful prayers that he (she) may serve with us to the glory of God and to the strengthening of His Kingdom in our midst.

Let us pray:

Our crucified and risen Saviour, Thou Who art the Head and Lord of the Church, we thank Thee for sending this, Thy servant, to us. Guide, bless and use him (her) mightily in the work to which he (she) has been called. Grant that he (she) may live close to Thee

as he (she) witnesses to others of Thee; that he (she) may be led by Thee as he (she) leads others to Thee; that he (she) may be taught by Thee as he (she) teaches others Thy saving truths and that he (she) may grow daily in Thy grace as he (she) helps others to grow in their Christian faith and life.

We pray that his (her) burden may be light because he (she) is supported by the prayers and co-operation of all the members of this congregation. May it be light, too, because of Thy promise to give joy, strength and peace to all who call upon Thy Name.

Bless us all as we renew our dedication to Thee and to the great work which is ours as a Christian Church and as a Fellowship of the concerned. We ask all this in Thy Name, for Thou art our Saviour and our King. Amen.

### **A Life Ablaze**

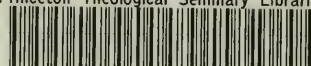
*I saw a human life ablaze with God;  
I felt a power divine,  
As through an empty vessel of frail clay  
I saw God's glory shine.  
Then woke I from a dream, and cried aloud:  
"My Father, give to me  
The blessing of a life consumed by God,  
That I may live for Thee."*

### Had Moses Failed to Go

*Had Moses failed to go, had God  
Granted his prayer, there would have been  
For him no leadership to win;  
No pillared fire; no magic rod;  
No wonders in the land of Zin;  
No smiting of the sea; no tears  
Ecstatic shed on Sinai steep;  
No Nebo, with a God to keep  
His burial; only forty years  
Of desert watching with his sheep.*



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